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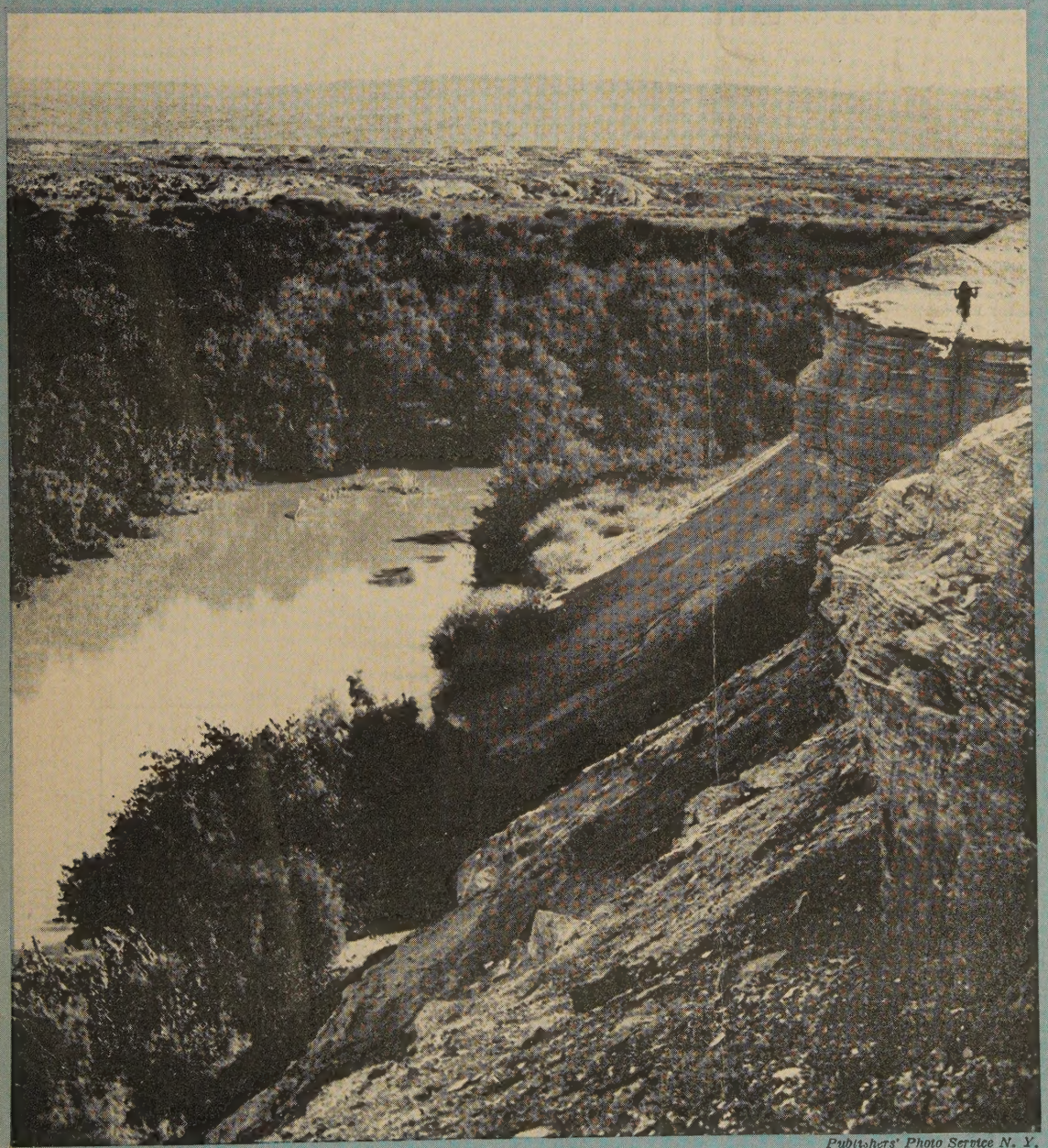

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Volume 52 — Number 3 — $2.00 a year — 25¢ a copy

Annual Bible Number

March 1933

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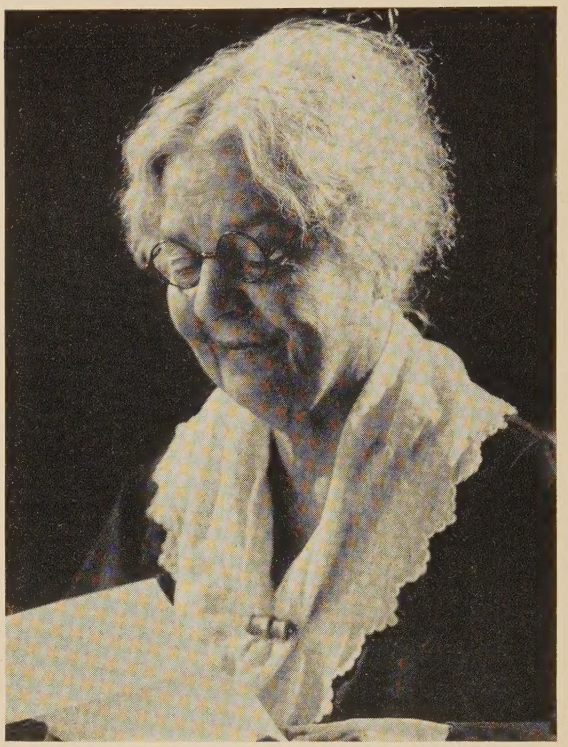

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CURRENT THOUGHT

✠ WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT a community if it gains the whole world and loses its boys and girls?

✠ THE SALVATION ARMY, which says a man may be down but he's never out, apparently has never made an every-member canvass.

✠ IT IS CHRIST who saves, not the man who puts Christ's case cleverly. Our God is a living God really at work in the world.

✠ I PRAYED to be good and do good, and if I have had success it is due to prayer. Sportsmanship is spiritual.—Amos Alonzo Stagg.

✠ HAPPINESS IN MARRIAGE is not a matter of sentiment. It is a matter of knowledge, ideals, and ethical control. —Albert E. Bailey.

✠ IF A MAN WANTS TO KNOW what his real religion is he should ask himself, What are the things which I would die rather than do?—Dean Inge.

✠ HISTORY RECORDS that many great movements have been conceived in adversity and born in necessity. It is in the hour of trial that the hearts and minds of men are stirred to great undertakings.—Ramsey MacDonald.

✠ THESE BIBLE NARRATIVES are the only accounts of the breaking of racial barriers in the literature of that day. There are no such tales outside the Bible in the literature of that period.—F. J. Gielow.

✠ A CHRISTIAN HYMN is a lyric poem, devotional in spirit and reverent in tone, which is designed to be sung and which expresses the worshiper's attitude toward God, or God's purpose in human life. It should be simple and metrical in form, genuinely emotional and literary in style, spiritual in quality, and in its ideas so direct and immediately apparent as to unify a congregation singing it.—Carl F. Price.

✠ THERE ARE, INDEED, those who tell us that no defence of the faith is necessary. "The Bible needs no defence," say they. "Let us not be forever defending Christianity, but instead let us go forth joyously to propagate Christianity!" But I have observed one curious fact: when men talk thus about propagating Christianity without defending it, the thing that they are propagating is pretty sure not to be Christianity at all.—J. Gresham Machen.

✠ WE WHO BELIEVE in this book from end to end need not be ashamed to say that we believe in it. Its assurances are confirmed in our experience. I have

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✠ IGNORANCE of the Bible means ignorance of Christ.—Jerome.

Troubles are often the tools by which God fashions us for better things.—Henry Ward Beecher.

THIS MONTH

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NEXT MONTH

GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER NUMBER

Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified
J. Stuart Holden

The Cross
J. Harry Cotton

From What Does Christ Redeem Us?
Donald Mackenzie

Humbled—Exalted
Northcote Deck

The New C-E Society
Ward W. Adair

The Lost Chord
James I. Vance

Horizoned the Son of God by the Resurrection
G. Campbell Morgan

Also **Dr. Mackenzie's Bible Notes for Daily Devotions—Mrs. Moulton's Christian Endeavor Topics—Selected Thoughts for the Quiet Hour—International Sunday School Lessons—Book Reviews**

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Here's a Nice One!

Vineland, N. J.

Dear Mr. Fitt:

I have been a subscriber to the R. C. W. for almost the entire period of my Christian life. I have occasionally allowed the subscription to lapse, but only for a little while, as it has always appeared to be next to indispensable both as a homiletic aid and in the nurture of my Christian life. No other reading has yielded me such rich fruitage apart from the Word itself. I have wondered why it does not have a larger circulation.

The new dress adds to the eye-appeal wonderfully.

Dr. Mackenzie's devotional studies of recent months, especially those upon the characters of God, have been greatly enjoyed. I recall those by A. T. Pierson, F. B. Meyer and John Gardner gratefully.

I notice you clip something of my dear Bro. H. C. Morrison's occasionally, something in current issue. I was converted under his ministry in 1892, and was for a time office editor and business manager of his weekly.

(Signed) T. O. Chisholm.

Winona Lake (Indiana) School of Theology

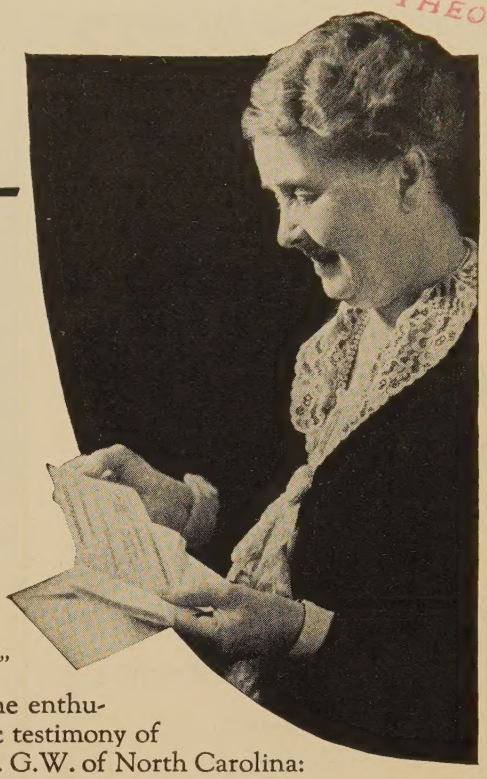
Plans are announced for the 1933 session of this unique summer school of Theology to be held at the Winona Lake conference grounds July 5 to August 11.

The school is interdenominational, and brings to its faculty only teachers of authority in their respective fields. This year's staff includes among others Dr. Melvin Grove Kyle, the archeologist; Dr. Harold Paul Sloan, pastor and teacher; Dr. John R. Sampey, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville; and Dr. Leander S. Keyser of Hamma Divinity School. In addition to classroom work these teachers will speak at afternoon Popular Hours on interesting subjects.

A prospectus giving full information as to courses, credits, expenses and other details may be had from Dean J. A. Huffman, Marion, Indiana.

The new form is an improvement upon the other, and I hope your magazine will have great success in the future. It seems unfortunate that some of our better magazines must be discontinued.—New York.

A SAFE FINANCIAL PLAN



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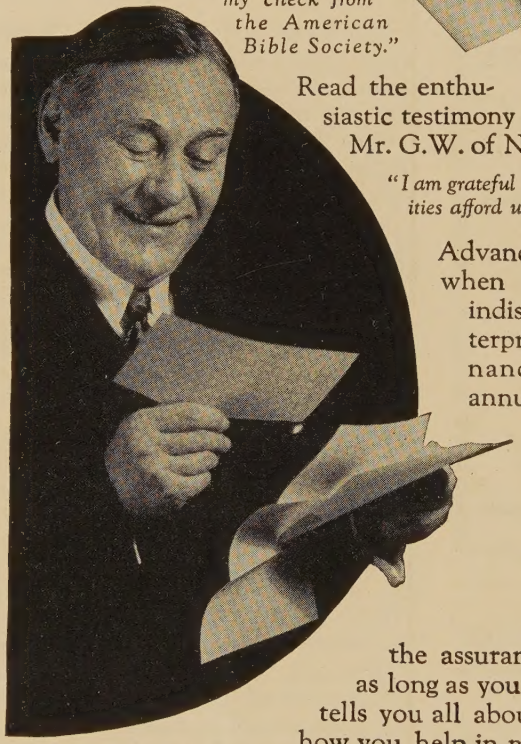

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All Aboard for a Trip to Alaska!

Sunset on Cook Inlet, Alaska, where 30-foot tides rival those of the Bay of Fundy

The RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK with other religious magazines has planned for its readers a "Seeing America" trip next summer. Many of our readers have visited Yellowstone and Glacier Parks, others have yearned to see them. Alaska, too, America's Far North possession, where Northern lights, midnight sun, Esquimaux and polar bears have their place. All will be included in the tour that has been planned.

Readers able to go will thoroughly enjoy the adventure and the comradeship, the new friends, new sights, new horizons.

First among white settlers in Alaska were missionaries of the Christian church. Their works are still living, and the party will pay its respects to some of the monuments to the devotion of the successful pioneer and present day Alaskan missionaries. Brief calls will be made to the Indian church at Ketchikan, to the Presbyterian mission at Wrangell, to Sheldon Jackson Indian Training School at Sitka, and the mission at Haines, all in Alaska.

On his death bed recently a successful Nebraska farmer called his devoted wife and their children to his bedside and said:

"I have put off that vacation we were going to take together until too late, but I want you to promise me that you will not grind away the rest of your lives here on the farm without seeing something of the world. Your work and your home will mean more to you after you have seen more of nature's wonders, and I want you to promise me that you will take some of our savings each year for travel."

He was able to leave a trust for that purpose. His family is enjoying it today. Their deep regret is that their father was always too busy for travel and recreation. He waited too long.

Travel is a great educator, an inspiring adventure, an essential part of American life. The RECORD party will visit the Century of Progress in Chicago, and then leave for the Twin Cities and Yellowstone Park on the Burlington and Northern Pacific, special Pullmans and a dining car and an observation car having been reserved for that purpose. After seeing Old Faithful Geyser, the Grand Canyon and other Yellowstone wonders, our group will go to Portland on the Northern Pacific and Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railways, motor on the Columbia River Highway, and then go to Seattle, city of hills and gateway to the Orient and Alaska.

From Pier 2 we will sail on the "S. S. Alaska" of the Alaska Steamship Company through the sheltered Inside Passage to Victoria, B. C., to Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Taku Glacier, Juneau, Haines, Skagway and Sitka in Alaska.

What a marvelous experience "Alaska" will be for our readers! Robert Service wrote of it:

"Let us probe the silent places,
Let us seek what luck betide us,
Let us journey to a lonely
Land I know!

"There's a whisper in the nightwind,
There's a star agleam to guide us,
And the Wild is calling, calling,—
Let us go!"

The steamer floats for 11 days between great mountain peaks and through peaceful canyons.

After the cruise, our party will return from the North Pacific coast on the Great Northern to lovely Glacier Park for a brief stop-over at Glacier Hotel and Many Glacier Hotel. Then homeward bound!

By taking advantage of the low rates available this summer and buying as a party, the RECORD has secured an exceedingly attractive price for this trip.

Readers are invited to make inquiry of the editor.

RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK

A. P. Fitt
EDITOR

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Volume 52 East Northfield, Massachusetts, March, 1933 Number 3

✠EMIL LUDWIG declares that the Jews are not the salt but the pepper of the earth, and therewith attempts to explain the widespread aversion against the Jews.

✠IT IS STATED that while the expulsion of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic in Spain eased the repression of evangelical Christianity, the lay power and liberal laws have opened the way to all kinds of daring and anti-religious ideas which before were hardly known in Spain. Against these the evangelicals must inevitably strive.

✠PROBABLY ALONE among the governments of the world the British throne sends forth a message implying a personal faith in the Saviour. King George thus greeted the reunited Methodists:

"I trust and pray that their union in one church may quicken and strengthen their zeal, and may enable them with increased efficiency and devotion to fulfil their service to the cause and kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

✠MRS. ROHOLD OF HAIFA, Palestine, asked an old orthodox Jewess in the clinic of the mission one day:

"Why do you Jews come to see the doctor?"

"Well," was the reply, "your doctor and the sisters have the soft touch."

"I told her it was the love of Christ that gives us the soft touch, and if she came to the meetings as well as to the medical clinic she would know more about it."

✠ONE BOY WENT HOME from a Summer-Bible School conducted by the Canadian Sunday School Mission and said the teacher swore more than he did. Probably it was the first time this boy had heard the name of God except in oaths.

"The work was hard the first week. One man told us we could go to China if we wanted to do missionary work. The children are very ignorant about religious things."

✠CARRIE NATION has been made the subject of a drama recently put on the New York stage.

The author is said to handle this forceful character of the late '90s with sympathy, if not with charity. Her mother was insane, her father a religious fanatic. Her first husband, Charles Gloyd, was a drunken doctor. Her second husband did not count for much.

The play enacts her discovery of her mission, her experiences in being jailed and beaten up, her activity with her hatchet, all in the intensity of religious and prohibition conviction. She had no fear, and pursued her aim tenaciously.

The real evils of the saloon and the curse of the liquor business receive ample emphasis.

✠ONE OF THE STUDENTS of the Karen Theological Seminary of Insein, Burma, tells of an experience he had with an old man to whom he was talking during the vacation. It ran something like this:

"I like you young fellows. You seem to talk differently from what I have heard other Christians talk. They used to preach at me and tell what they had read in a book, and repeat some rules and laws and tell me I ought to leave my own religion and take theirs. But you come with a different story. You tell us that something has happened in your own life, and that it makes you different, and that you have joy, and I see you do seem to have it. You really act as if you were different and I like it and I would like to have you come and talk to me."

✠THE BIBLE INSTITUTE MOVEMENT grows apace.

A new institute has been opened at Temple Terrace, Florida, with Rev. W. T. Watson as president. A correspondent says Mr. Watson studied at the Toccoa (Ga.) Bible Institute. He has a large church in St. Petersburg. He is regarded as a natural evangelist, and soon realized the need of a school to train his young people for service. The building he rented at Temple Terrace was built without regard to cost in boom times for a country club.

The teaching staff of the new institute includes among others Dr. C. H. Tyndall, W. R. Newell, Dr. Howard W. Pope, and Rev. W. Vandeventer (Hymnology).

The value of sound Bible Institutes in various localities has been tested and found worthwhile.

✠A REMARKABLE CEREMONY took place in Torgau, Germany, last October. There stands the first church built in Germany by the Protestants. History reports that Luther took an active part in its construction.

The church was first used for public service on the 5th of October, 1544, by Luther: that is, a year and a half before his death. The Prince of Saxony, Johan Friedrich, attended the service with his whole court. The sermon preached on the occasion has been preserved, together with the music composed by Johan Walter.

The building had suffered much from decay, and for a long time past no service was held in it. Now, however, it has been completely restored in its original form and solemnly opened. The original music by Johan Walter was performed on this occasion.

✠THE BODY OF CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL, who died in 1930, rests in the crypt of St. Peter's at Rome. In his will he wrote:

"I desire to be buried with the utmost simplicity, and that on my tomb should be written only my name and these words, 'Da mihi animas, cœtera tolle,' the aspiration of my whole life."

The plain and massive sarcophagus of onyx which covers him bears the text he asked for.

The original words are in Genesis 14. 21:

"And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons and take the goods to thyself!"

For "persons" the marginal reading

has "souls." Dr. Moffatt translates the words, "Take the goods yourself and let me have the prisoners!" In their mystical meaning, "Give me the souls," the ancient words became the lifelong aspiration of this prelate.

Church Doors without Locks

The Christmas offering at the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Fifth Avenue and Tenth Street, New York, was four times as large as any offering in the last ten years of the church's history, the Rev. Dr. Donald B. Aldrich, the rector, told his congregation at a watch-night service.

"Many people of moderate means have sacrificed to maintain 'the open door' through which more than 5,000 unknown worshipers have come in the night hours alone during the past year," Dr. Aldrich continued.

He announced that $72,000 had been contributed for relief of the needy and maintenance of the church.

There are no locks on the front doors of this church. It is open 24 hours every day.

How About It?

In his designation of 1933 as a Holy Year of Jubilee the pope took the ground that 1933 is "that which the common opinion of the faithful identifies unhesitatingly" as the 19th centenary of the death of Christ, around which cluster "all the foundations of Christianity,—the institution of the Eucharist, the first communion, the initiation of the apostles into the priesthood, the primacy conferred on Peter, the resurrection and ascension, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the triumphant beginning of the apostolic preaching." From all this proceeded "the true renaissance of the world."

Recent scholarship, however, though not unanimous, deducing the chronology of the life of Christ from contemporary Roman history, sets the birth of Christ in December, B.C. 5, or thereabouts, which would give April, A.D. 30 as the date of the crucifixion. In fact, the date of this event is reckoned to be April 7, A.D. 30, while Pentecost is dated May 28 following.

Protestant communions generally celebrated the coming of the Holy Spirit in 1930.

The Koran in Turkish

The "Moslem World" for this quarter has an article describing the introduction of the Turkish translation of the Koran into public worship in the mosques: first of all in one mosque in Istanbul (Constantinople), which proved a definite success and was followed by other mosques throughout all Turkey.

"On the Night of Decree," writes F. L. MacCallum, "the climax of the Moslem religious year, that night on which the prophet visited heaven and saw Allah's face, and on which men's fates are appointed," which fell last year on February 3, the Turkish Koran was read by 30 hafiz-reciters in the mosque of St. Sophia, and the entire service was broadcast by radio.

At 8.30 the muezzins lifted their voices in an overpowering cry, "God is great!" But no longer was it the Arabic, "Allahu akbar!" but:

"Tanri uludur!"

Tanri is the Turkish sky-god who had brooded over the Turkish peoples in their fertile homelands in Central Asia ages before.

"With that cry something deep and long pent surged from the Turkish heart. The religious life of the Turkish Republic took a definite turn. . . . The Turks were tearing their religious life free from the senseless clutch of the withered hand of Arabia."

Vigor of Spiritual Life

The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Word in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from the experience of 54 years. The first three years after conversion I neglected the Word of God. Since I began to search it diligently the blessing has been wonderful. I have read the Bible through one hundred times, and always with increasing delight. Each time it seems like a new book to me. Great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study. I look upon it as a lost day when I have not had a good time over the Word of God.—George Müller.

From the Luanza Mission

GEORGE EDWIN TILSLEY, M.D.

Anasa was about seven years old. We operated on him for a stoppage of the bowel. He was nearly well again when the influenza (of which an epidemic this year has killed hundreds in the countryside,) seized the little fellow. A cold became bronchitis, bronchitis became pneumonia, and soon it became clear that he would leave us.

His father tenderly watched over him as for the only time in his life he reclined on a real bed: it was in one of the blocks of the Dan Crawford Memorial Hospital. His mother was unremitting in her care of the wee laddie. How I wish I could scotch forever the black lie that says the Africans have no love!

Anasa's mother told her little son that soon he would be going away on a journey to see Jesus. Anasa smiled a wan smile, but a real one.

"Yes," said he, "I shall like to have a long look at him!"

Then shadow came into his eyes, and trouble into his tired voice.

"But aren't you coming with me to his village?" he asked.

"Well," said his so-wise mother, "we can only go to the King's Kraal when he calls us, Anasa. He is calling for you, but he has not summoned me yet. When he does, then I'll come ever so quickly, and we'll live together in his lovely village!"

The cloud left Anasa's little face, the smile came back. Against his mother's dark breasts he nestled his hot head, and so fell asleep. He never awakened.

The Rural Problem

A priest, a member of the faculty of one of the most important Roman Catholic colleges, writes a trenchant letter to the "Commonweal" beginning with this paragraph:

"It would not be surprising if someone should ask the question: Has the Catholic church in the United States no interest in the farmer?"

He protests that the Romanist press and all other agencies of publicity discuss anything and everything but the condition of Romanism in the rural sections of the United States. His letter provokes this editorial challenge:

"If Catholics do not go back to the land in large numbers, under conditions which will give them at least a fair chance to make a decent living, and to educate their children adequately, and to achieve a reasonable measure of economic security and cultural and spiritual advantages, the Catholic church in this country would seem to be doomed to speedy and incurable decay. Something like 80% of our Catholic population is at present urban. City life destroys human fertility in some three to four generations. Immigration walls now prevent the influx of fresh Catholic stock. Humanly speaking, nothing is more certain than that unless American Catholics return to the soil and plant deep and permanent roots in it the present 20% of the population claimed by the church will dwindle far, far below that point, inexorably

EVANGELICAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOG

and rapidly. For those awake to the truth the convention at Dubuque is an effort to avert the threatened doom of the Catholic church in the United States. That doom is certain unless American Catholics listen to the handful of devoted and enlightened men and women who lead the pitiably small and wretchedly supported organization of the Catholic Rural Life Conference."

The Free Church of America

The organization of a Free Church of America by uniting the Unitarian and Universalist communions has been advanced a step by the publication of the report of the commissions of the two bodies authorized to confer on a plan of union.

A larger and more inclusive fellowship of religious liberals is preferred to a merger of the two denominations. There is to be no creed as a condition of membership. Local churches would retain their present name, adding thereto "Free Church of America." Each affiliated denomination would retain, for the present at least, its ecclesiastical name and its funds. So far as possible, however, all departments of work would be united or coördinated in order to do away with duplication and to promote greater efficiency in the use of men and of material.

"We affirm our faith that unity of purpose is the bond of highest religious fellowship. We seek closer coöperation with others of like purpose, recognizing that in accordance with congregational polity the members of this fellowship have entire freedom in matters of religious belief and statements of faith, and holding that, if we are controlled by a purpose to serve mankind in a spirit of mutual good will, differing statements of faith may enrich our common life. . . .

"New days create new possibilities. A growing similarity among religious liberals lessens the old cleavages. The good which all the churches of the free spirit can accomplish by the coördination or the merging of interests and activities is beyond estimate."

In conclusion the commissions state their conviction that this whole plan for the Free Church of America is a venture of faith which once undertaken will be abundantly justified.

The proposed plan is to be submitted to the annual meeting of the American Unitarian Association in May and to the biennial session of the Universalist General Convention in October.

Boys and girls in far-off Labrador can be reached by the gospel in print

News Items About the Bible

✠ THE WURTEMBURG BIBLE SOCIETY has now existed for 120 years, and during that period has sent out twenty-three million Bibles.

✠ A PACKET was received recently at the London Bible House containing three £500 bank notes. Enclosed with them was the following note:

"The donor remits herewith three five-hundred pound bank notes in aid of the General Funds of the Bible Society."

For many years three such notes have reached the Bible Society anonymously. This year's gift is in almost unbroken succession with a similar amount given in 1909.

✠ A MUSLIM NEWSPAPER IN LAHORE published an editorial as follows on the Arabic Bible for the blind, issued by the British and Foreign Bible Society:

"We cannot but admire the zeal with which the Christians have propagated their Scriptures in every spoken language and dialect of the world. . . . Century follows century, and the Bible remains the same. Empires rise and fall across the great horizon of the world of Islam and are forgotten, but the Bible abides. Dynasty succeeds dynasty, but the Bible rules human hearts. Kings are crowned and uncrowned, but the crown of Christ is not taken from his brow."

✠ THE RIGHT HON. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL of London includes an essay on Moses in a recent autobiographical miscellany called "Amid These Storms" (Scribner). "Unmoved by the tomes of Professor Gradgrind and Dr. Dryasdust," he insists on "taking the Bible story literally," and adds:

"We may be sure that all these things happened just as they are set out according to Holy Writ. We may believe that they happened to people not so different from ourselves, and that the impressions those people received were faithfully recorded, and have been transmitted across the centuries with far more accuracy than many of the telegraphed accounts we read of the goings-on of today. In the words of a forgotten work of William E. Gladstone, we rest with assurance upon 'The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture.'"

✠ WRITING OF THE INTEREST in the Bible shown by caste people, an Indian clergyman says:

"Let our cry be: The Bible is the only remedy for India! I am sure that nothing can save India except the Word of God. I emphasize this statement with all the emphasis at my command. . . . It is decidedly clear that people of all creeds and shades of opinion have found something in the Bible which they hold fast and sacred."

He goes on to tell how people at a fair flocked round him, eager for more of the books and tracts which they had purchased from him on a former visit. In another fair an educated Brahman came up to him and said:

"Sir, whenever I am in trouble, distress, or sorrow I read the Bible and get consolation and peace. All my troubles flee away, and I start my work with new hopes."

✠ THE PHILIPPINES, when all is said and done, are a Roman Catholic country, in the opinion of Rev. G. B. Cameron. Ever since the American occupation, first Spanish, then more recently American priests and bishops have poured into the islands. However, the North with its culture is less amenable to its discipline, and therefore it is in the South that Rome still holds sway over the masses of the people.

Protestant field forces in the South are not only too few to make many inroads against such a bulwark of fear, he says, but are being overwhelmed by the small army of American leaders and new Filipino priests being poured into the

field. Literature is being used by the priests most strategically among the students, and preaching is the order of the day among the more illiterate masses. Catchwords are being sent out to warn the people against Protestant leaders and Protestant propaganda. The Bible of the American Bible Society is labeled "Protestante" and declared anathema. "I saw one woman hurl a Testament to the ground and spit on it when she found it was a 'Protestante' Bible."

✠MISS ALICE NYBOER, of the Inland South America Missionary Union, who is stationed in Bolivia, has something to tell of an old Christian Indian.

"Last night our hall was filled. I had to sit on a soap-box for lack of seats. Our Sunday school, too, is being well attended. We have five classes.

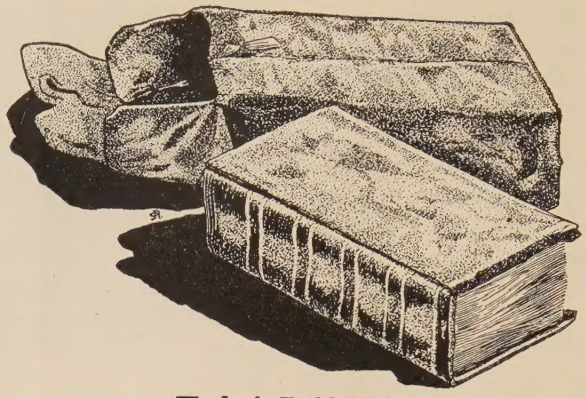
"Just before dismissal the native superintendent asks the pupils questions about the lesson. Old and young are called upon. Yesterday old Doña Louisa, a pure Chiquitana Indian, a dear old saint, was called upon to retell the lesson I had taught her. It happened to be about Peter in prison, and how the prayers of the early church ascended for his deliverance. I'd like to see any 60-year-old lady back home, one who could not read or write, duplicate Doña Louisa! How well she retold it, emphasizing the lack of faith on the part of the believers when God did answer their prayers! Is it worth while leaving home and loved ones to teach these folks? It surely is!"

Wesley's Field Bible

John Wesley's Bible, which played a dramatic part in the great Methodist Reunion at the Albert Hall, is one of the most cherished treasures of the Methodist church. It was handed to Dr. Scott Lidgett as a symbol of the Wesleyan Methodist church on his induction as first president of the united church.

The Bible, which the great evangelist carried with him, is quite an ordinary pocket volume, except that it is very old.

It used to be the practice of each Wesleyan president to carry the Bible with him everywhere he went. It has been in every town, village and hamlet in England. Now the precious book has a home of steel, thief-proof, fireproof. It is expected to come back to its home in the safe of the Methodist Bookroom, City Road, London, there to remain until a new president succeeds Dr. Scott Lidgett as head of the Methodist church.



Wesley's Field Bible

Wesley's Bible could have been sold for almost any price from time to time. America longed to possess it, but the Methodist church, even in its poorest day, was never so poor as to part with the little thumb-marked book in the shabby, tattered leather cover.—"Methodist Times."

Saw Jericho's Walls Collapse!

Prof. A. S. Yahuda, who formerly held the chair of Biblical History in the University of Berlin, and later that of Semitic Languages in the University of Madrid, recently said in an interview in London, according to a press report that every archeological discovery in Palestine and Mesopotamia of the Bible period bears out the historical accuracy of the Bible, and that Moses himself probably wrote the story of the Exodus from Egypt.

The professor does not believe that the stories of Genesis were written during the exile in Babylon about the sixth century B. C. "If that were so," he declared, "the language would have shown unmistakable evidence of Assyrian influence. On examining the origins of the words I have found that there is little trace indeed of such influence. These stories are far older than the exile in Babylon. They belong to the time of the patriarchs of the great civilization of Ur. . . .

"The discovery by Professor John Garstang that the walls of Jericho did fall flat is another tribute to the Bible. Again from the linguistic evidence I contend that the account of the siege must have been written under the influence of Egyptian culture. What is equally definite is that it would be almost an impossibility for such detail as is given in the Bible story to have been written centuries afterward.

"We can say now, from clear evidence, that the man who wrote the book of Joshua saw Jericho's walls collapse."

A Homily on the Family Bible

REV. J. B. BROOKS

After over four years going to and fro on the Bradford trams no conductor can now surprise me overmuch by his remarks or questions, so that when a conductor asked me, confidentially, if I could get him a family Bible I nodded my head and said that I was sure I could.

"It's for my old mother," he explained. "She has always read her Bible, but her eyes are getting dim, and I thought you might be able to get her a large-type one."

"I think I can get you one cheap," I said.

My search the next day revealed, as I suspected from previous casual observation, that family Bibles abound in the back rooms of second-hand furniture, picture and book dealers, and I soon found that a £1 note would buy a dozen of them. I got a large one for a shilling from a shop near home.

My investigation led me furiously to think. Alas for the old estate of the dear old family Bible! A century ago read by the head of the family in many homes! Witness to the birth of the boys and girls as the family was being built up: names all carefully recorded in it!

Its second estate at the end of the century found it retained as an ornament, often standing on a little table in the bow window of the parlor and sustaining a plant pot containing a young aspidistra.

Now, alas! you will find it in its third and I fear its last estate, covered with dust in the second-hand dealer's back apartment, lying with others of various sizes, and unless it is fortunate, as my shilling one has been, inevitably bound for the pulping machine.—"Methodist Times."

By Way of Suggestion

Religious Dramas

The First Christian Church of Hiawatha, Kansas, has engaged for the second season in the production of a series of seven religious dramatic homilies. The minister, Rev. Yandell S. Beans, wrote and directs each drama. They are given the third Sunday night in each month, November to May.

No admission is charged. The doors are open to the public, and everyone is cordially invited to come. Usually a free-will offering is taken to help defray expenses, but in no instance are the plays an attempt to raise funds or make money. The First Christian Church has adopted this as one method of presenting great moral lessons and conveying spiritual truths.

The church is thoroughly equipped with portable stage, dimmers, three tone lights, spot, drops, curtains, draperies, costumes, and such other requisites as are necessary to successfully produce religious dramas. A mature cast of experienced players guarantees a professional interpretation as well as a sympathetic appreciation of the rôles portrayed.

The opening drama of the series is "Miriam: A Love Story of Long Ago": a story of a young Pharisee and his love for a beautiful girl.

No. 2 is "Dawn," a Christmas story which gives a new and vivid conception of the magi and of events taking place at the time of Christ's birth.

No. 3 is "The Crimson Sacrifice," being the story of Jephthah's daughter.

No. 4 is "The Good Samaritan"; No. 5, "Lust," based on the Parable of the Prodigal Son; No. 6, "The Man from Cyrene" who was compelled to carry Christ's cross; and No. 7, "Judas Iscariot."

Moses at the Court of Pharaoh

is the title of a presentation of the familiar Bible narrative over the radio by the Chicago Bible Society. "It is a prayerful endeavor to make this story vividly real where the Bible perhaps is too little known."

How One Person Reads the Bible

Sometimes I read the passage of Scripture and appeared to get no good from it. But I watched the boys fishing with rod and line. I noticed they have to throw it in two or three times, but at last they get a bite, and catch their fish. So now I read the passages over and over till I catch something.

Reports and Statistics

✠AN 8-DAY OBSERVANCE of the 52nd birthday of the Christian Endeavor movement was held in February in practically every country in the world.

The theme for the week was "Serving Christ with My Best." The hymn featured in mass meetings, devotional gatherings and fellowship dinners was Havergal's

"Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee!"

Bible study, denominational activities, emphasis on world peace, and a recognition of work done by alumni of the movement in the past 50 years were included in the observance as planned by various groups and unions in North America and other continents.

✠THE ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION of evangelists and Christian workers held under the auspices of the Interdenominational Evangelistic Association of Winona Lake, Indiana, met this year in Cadle Tabernacle, Indianapolis, for eight days. It was considered the best and most largely attended convention yet held.

Reports from every part of the United States by leading evangelists indicated that pastors and churches everywhere are preparing for great emphasis on evangelism and arranging for revivals during the year. A number of evangelists reported they are engaged for many months ahead, and some for over a year. The imperative need of a nationwide revival was apparent to all.

Invitations were received from New York, Chicago, Detroit, Washington, Philadelphia, Indianapolis, Toronto, Long Beach, New Orleans, and other cities for the convention next year.

✠DURING THE FIRST TEN MONTHS of 1932, in spite of the economic depression in this and other countries, the Bible Institute Colportage Association of Chicago was able to place in circulation a total of over 2,750,000 copies of evangelical literature, or an aggregate of 107,000,000 pages (estimated), as follows:

	NUMBER
Bibles	3,916
New Testaments	43,390
Scripture portions	554,141
Pocket Treasury	38,702
Colportage books	147,707
Evangel Booklets	108,456
Other Christian books	88,135
Gospel tracts	1,770,500
	2,754,947

Christ Is Not on Trial!

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of their founding, the Home Missions Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions met in annual joint and separate sessions in New York City last January. In spite of a year of anxiety and difficulty just closed the representatives of the home mission boards and societies of 28 denominations experienced a real fellowship as they engaged in conferences and worship during three days. There were many evidences that in the face of painful administrative problems many of the agencies had passed through a year of gratifying accomplishments. There were reports of spiritual gains exceeding those experienced within a decade.

In his annual address as president of the Home Missions Council Dr. John McDowell of New York City declared that present conditions have created an inescapable demand on all missionary agencies to project a united, coördinated, coöperative program that will put an end to all overlooking and overlapping in missionary service.

"In this day of doubt and fear we do well to remember that it is not Christ who is on trial today: it is our interpretation of him," said Dr. McDowell. "He is still the Saviour of the world, and all that saved the world is his. All hope of the world is still in his keeping, and the needs of the people are in his heart."

A more sympathetic understanding of the Indian and his needs was urged at a joint session in which an Indian and a white man spoke.

Rev. G. E. E. Lindquist, a member of the United States Board of Indian Commissioners, stated that there are three factors that retard the social and religious development of the American Indian, namely, tribalism, isolation and segregation. The government owes the Indian more because he is a human being than because he is an Indian, declared Mr. Lindquist.

Rev. David Owl, a Cherokee Indian, in answering the question "What does the Indian want?" stated that the Indian craves fellowship and coöperation, and desires to share with white people opportunities for the development of his capabilities for worthwhile

employment and for leadership. There should be more openings, stated Mr. Owl, for Indian boys and girls who want to go to institutions for higher learning.

Bible Distribution in New York

The New York Bible Society, which is the only organization of its kind having for its sole work Bible distribution in the city and harbor of New York, held its 123rd annual meeting in January. During the Society's 123 years of existence a total of 18,177,452 volumes have been given out. In 1932 the total distributed was 802,563. Of this number 143,271 Bibles were given to the crews of steamers and freighters; 58,546 were given to immigrants upon arrival; and 600,746 volumes were distributed in hotels, hospitals, prisons, institutions and in the homes of the needy of all races.

Four new languages were added by the Society to its list of unusual tongues and dialects in which the Bible was circulated, making the total number of foreign languages in which the Bible was distributed in New York last year 79. The four additions were African Xosa, Tonga, Goanese and Seneca.

The most interesting of these is that in Goanese (or Konkani). This was obtained by the Society at the request of its waterfront workers, who distribute the Scriptures to seamen on vessels and crafts along the New York waterfront. These workers discovered groups of Indian coolies speaking Goanese on freight steamers that dock regularly in the East River. Goanese, a hybrid language made up of Portuguese and the native language, is spoken by a large class of natives on the southwestern coast of India, where a colony of Portuguese navigators settled hundreds of years ago.

The request for the Bible in Xosa was made by the niece of a South African tribe chief who came to get her Master's degree at Columbia University.

The request for Seneca came from an American Indian of that tribe who formerly lived in northern New York State.

The Bible in Tonga was supplied at the request of a South African Chieftain's daughter who was a student in New York.

A request for Broad Scotch came from a Negro in Harlem whose family had emigrated from the West Indies to Scotland when he was a boy.

East Indian and Chinese crews, who are denied landing by special immigration restrictions, take a goodly percentage of the translated Bibles, which often form the only reading matter in their native tongue seen by these seamen during their trips to the far ends of the earth. For those who want to learn English there are portions of the Bible printed in two languages.

In the earlier days of the New York Bible Society's existence every ship's company from foreign shores was met at Ellis Island and each immigrant was given a portion of the Bible in his native tongue. With the diminished immigration the Society has enlarged this phase of its work to include the unwanted alien and deportee class. Ships from abroad still are met by the Society's agents at the piers.

Daily Vacation Bible Schools in Greece

The School of Religion in Athens, Greece, carried out an extensive D.V.B.S. program last summer through its students. From a full report of absorbing interest we derive the description of a school in Derghouti, a large refugee camp near Athens. About 5,000 Armenians are actually living in this camp in miserable little huts which are always under the threat of being demolished one day, leaving the poor population without homes and shelter.

This year poverty was more intense among Armenians, and many were the numbers of those who volunteered to emigrate to Soviet Armenia. They were easily conciliated with the alternative of working for the state in return for daily bread rather than to work for themselves and famish with hunger and uncertainty.

The work in these camps around Athens was unique for the religious education of Armenian children, no matter to what denomination they belonged. It consisted of teaching the Christian life and its principles. The main goal was to create within the hearts of children a sense of Christian piety.

"For this purpose we taught old and new hymns and canticles. We worshiped in Gregorian and Protestant ways, though without an altar. It was a curious thing to see people looking eagerly into the hall and nodding their heads in sign of appreciation while we worshiped and sang. As our children came from three different churches and schools we tried to keep up their devotion in worship, though it was a difficult task to teach worship to a child who had learned it in a large, decorated church with images and candles. Nevertheless, the effect of our worship periods was great on the children, who at first were careless and disrespectful. By and by they became more devotional, singing their newly-learned hymns with great earnestness and solemnity."

Another thrilling experience was to hear those children sing their hymns at night in the narrow streets of the camp where they previously sang only erotic folk songs. The echoes of these new hymns will reach also the hearts of their parents, who in most cases have not listened to such beautiful hymns written for children, being used only to old canticles without understanding their words.

The children of the camp liked the school not because of the hymns and worship only, but for the various other activities too. One item among these activities consisted of spontaneous dramatization of stories which were told in the classes, be it from the Bible or from other sources. This activity being altogether a new experience for them, they were shy and without initiative at first, but by and by they became more free: so this activity has been a good opportunity for them to give vent to their desire for self-expression. The other activities consisted of embroidery for girls, drawing and handwriting for boys, handwork for all of them. In addition, there were fine indoor games, supplemented with group dances and songs, rhythmic gymnastics, etc. The idea of helpfulness dominated the activities, and they made several scrapbooks which were given as a present to

O Lord, thy Word is before us! Give us a meek and reverent and teachable mind while we read and study it! Open to us its sacred truths, and enable us to receive it not as the word of men, but as the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever!

Be thou, O blessed Spirit, our teacher! Enlighten our minds and prepare our hearts! Shine, Lord, upon thine own sacred page, and make it clear to us! What we see not show us, and where we are wrong correct us! Bring some portion home to our soul, and thus make us wise unto salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour! Amen.

a day-nursery for the entertainment of its little inhabitants. They discussed also cleanliness, practical hygiene, and care of animals.

"Twice we went on hikes. The first time we went to a mountainous forest with a fine fountain of cold water. The second time we went to the seashore. We can never forget the exclamations of joy of some children who had never seen the sea before, though they lived only four miles distant from it. It was a good time to be with them and to take part in their joy.

"In these restricted lines our intention is to show how great the need is for such Daily Vacation Bible Schools in these camps around Athens because of the lack of adequate religious education in the Gregorian church and also its insufficiency in the Sunday schools of Protestant churches. A little comparison would clearly show why we value so high the place of D.V.B.S. While in Sunday schools we religious educators are in touch with children for only half an hour a day each Sunday (excluding worship time), which will make about 25 hours a year, in the D.V.B.S. we are in touch with children for 90 hours consecutively during those six weeks, which seem to us in reality so short."

God's Gardeners

WILLARD PRICE

South Chicago. Tin cans. Cinders. Grimy factories. Pool halls. Pawn shops. Dust and smoke.

We go down a street full of holes, steering around broken glass. Railroad tracks on the right. Shabby gray huts on the left. A depressing scene!

But then we come to an oasis in the desert, a brilliant spot of color . . . a rainbow of a front yard full of nodding flowers! The little house behind it, yes, that is the number we are looking for.

Our knock is answered, and by the first man with a clean shave we have discovered in this part of the city: a quiet, intelligent, gentle person who does not seem to belong on this gunman type of street. So he has made the street, or at least part of it, belong to him. The house of Gabriel Vas the Bible man, although as poor as the others, is subtly different—because it is a Christian home. It breathes comfort and peace. Its plain furnishings, its books and magazines, its open Bible, are redolent with the personality of those who live here.

But the true index to the character of a householder is his backyard. If his spirit is cinders and dust, so will his backyard be. If his soul is full of flowers and springtime, some of the beauty of it will escape into his backyard.

Knowing this, we really should not gasp with astonishment, as we do, when Gabriel Vas throws open the back door and leads us into a veritable paradise of flowers. More than 200 varieties luxuriate in this garden where six years ago there was not a blade of grass. The splendor of the color symphony is matched only by the fragrance of the blooms. We cannot decide whether we are charmed more by things seen or things smelled—or things tasted, for the garden contains fruits, berries and vegetables in abundance. In the center of the garden is a rose-covered bower where Gabriel Vas, his wife and son come daily for family worship.

When we peer over the vine-covered fences we see that the contagion has spread. All up and down the street backyards are flowering from seeds and cuttings loaned by Mr. Vas. These gardens hardly compare with his, yet they show plainly the force of good example.

* * *

But a Christian who has come to share with his Creator the will to create loveliness and beauty, does not stop with the backyards of South Chicago hovels. He goes on to the dusty, hidden backyards of men's hearts.

I watch Gabriel Vas as he does it. With his bag full of Bibles, Testaments and Gospels which the American Bible Society has supplied to him as one of its official colporters he goes out into the dust-swirling street.

Courtesy American Bible Society

Any one and every one is a "prospect"

Yonder is a peripatetic grocery on wheels and a vender with a raucous voice who is proclaiming that he has fresh carrots, beans and cabbages for sale, cheap.

"But not so cheap as this!" interrupts Gabriel Vas quietly, displaying an open Gospel of St. John. "Salvation is free."

How will a busy street-grocer brook such interference? I soon see. After a moment of surprise he buries the silent Mr. Vas under a storm of abuse. But the Bible man comes up smiling. He replies calmly, persuasively. He is happy, because there is nothing he likes better than gardening and he is going to plant seeds in this hard soil. The horses stand lazily, the scale swings empty as the vender, now silent in his turn, listens to the earnest message and turns the pages of the Gospel that Mr. Vas has pressed into his hand. He is listening to a great story, the greatest story in the world. Somehow his carrots and cabbages do not seem important now. Finally it is the Bible man who must excuse himself, on the plea that there are many other people he must visit. As he passes on down the street I see the vender standing motionless beside his load, forgetful of everything except the little book which he is reading.

Anyone and everyone is a prospect for the Bible man: the street-cleaner who stands below the curb with brush and can and smokes his pipe meditatively as he listens; a mechanic poised on a stepladder, repairing the top of an automobile; two young men at the door of a pool hall; an unemployed father wheeling a baby carriage ceaselessly up and down the block, and glad enough to have a companion for half a dozen round trips; the proprietor of a Mexican restaurant whose white-scrawled windows proclaim the virtues of hot tamales and chili con carne; a housewife going home carrying a full shopping bag and trailing a drowsy child, who is not too sleepy, however, to demand that his mother buy a Gospel because of the bright picture on the cover; a haberdasher; a policeman; a priest; and what seems to be a bundle of rags in a dark doorway but proves to be the not very human form of a down-and-out.

Vas loves them all; lifts them to a higher plane of thought and action; gives them a glimpse of a better life. He works quietly. He is no blustering

(Please turn to page 144)

Seventeen Years without Furlough

W. R. Moody

I WAS lunching with Rev. J. D. Jones in the Reform Club in London in November, 1912. As we left the dining room and came out into the lobby two men were coming down the stairway. One was F. A. Atkins, whom I had known for several years, and the other was a stranger. There was nothing especially noticeable about him to attract attention, and I was rather surprised to have my host say:

"There is one of the greatest missionaries I've ever known with Atkins! You must meet him, and if possible get him to Northfield."

The introduction there on the stairway led to a friendship that I cherish as one of the most memorable in my life, leading eventually to an invitation to America and an extensive visit throughout the country during the ensuing winter which it was my privilege to plan.

Dan Crawford was a remarkable man. More than 30 years before he had plunged into Darkest Africa, and had never emerged from his field of labor until 1912. His book, "Thinking Black," has attracted wide attention, as it revealed the mental processes of the uncivilized people with whom he had been so long associated. But, strangely enough, during all those years he had kept abreast of current thought in his own land, and it was interesting to hear him discussing the Greek Testament with such an authority as Professor A. T. Robertson, or German philosophy with Scottish min-

From an old-time photo of Mr. and Mrs. Dan Crawford

isters who took part in the General Conference at Northfield with him. Looking back over the years the name of Dan Crawford is always bracketed in my mind with such pioneer missionaries as Robert Laws of Livingstonia and Charles W. Abel of New Guinea, who so long labored among primitive and savage peoples and did so much to bring them to the knowledge of the gospel and to the enlightening of their darkened minds.

When death removed Dan Crawford from his labors in Africa Mrs. Crawford assumed the duties he had so faithfully met. His genuine helper through many years, for which she was especially qualified by a medical preparation, and his companion to the hour of death, she has carried on the Bible school work with indomitable faith and labor. After more than 17 years of unceasing fidelity and without furlough it would seem that she should again visit friends in the homeland. It would undoubtedly afford an opportunity to awaken new interest in behalf of those for whom she and her husband so long labored, afford an opportunity to brush up in her medical work, and interest new friends in support of the work. There are hundreds who remember Dan Crawford and have a sympathetic interest in his work, to which they have contributed in the past, who would appreciate the opportunity of learning from Mrs. Crawford of its progress.

It is the realization of this that leads us to welcome the suggestion made in the following letter from one of the readers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK:

"Dear Mr. Moody: Having long been interested in Dan Crawford's work in Africa, and having heard him speak of that work when he was in this country, I have considered it a great privilege for years to have occasional letters from Mrs. Crawford. In a recent letter from her it is evident that after 17 long years of service without a furlough her soul longs for a sight of her loved ones and her homeland once more, yet she hesitates because the cost entailed would bring there some young devoted souls who are willing to give their lives to God's work in Africa. She has heroically labored on since her husband's homegoing, and richly deserves a much needed rest. A small check has been sent to her with the suggestion that it form a nucleus of a sum sufficient to take her home, provided her many friends in this country and hers have it laid on their hearts to add to it. It might be that as she spoke of her work in Africa the Lord might speak to souls whom he would send back with her, and whose response would be, 'Lord, here am I; send me!' Having been so long in tropical heat she would need to go in summer, and it takes so long to reach her and for her to make plans to leave we should need to act quickly. If it is in God's plan for her he will provide the way, but he works through us, his children.

"Yours for the work of God's kingdom. . . ."

We fully realize that there are numerous urgent calls in the homeland at the present time. But there is such a thing as a false economy; there is such a thing as giving that lendeth unto the Lord; and that which one hath given will he repay him again.

To cover the round trip from Luanza to London and return would require at least a thousand dollars in all. In the case of this faithful worker this will prove a wise investment, and to the cause of Darkest Africa it will mean increased efficiency and untold blessing.

In the multiplicity of small gifts is to be found the secret of great achievement. The readers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK have in this project a great opportunity and a rich privilege.

EDITOR'S NOTE

We shall be happy to receive gifts for the above friendly purpose from readers of this magazine, and to transmit them to Mrs. Crawford. Our readers have been able to judge the quality and consecration of Mrs. Crawford from the letters from her which we have printed from time to time.

Prevailing Religious and Moral Confusion is here portrayed with all its pathos and tragedy. The clear and simple gospel of Jesus Christ is the only and efficient cure.

Our Present Bewilderment

Rev. Paul E. Scherer, D.D., New York

IT IS written of Jesus that he had compassion on the multitudes because he saw they were distressed, distraught, bewildered, like sheep without a shepherd. I do not think that is quite our mood.

However it is with you, I know how it is in New York. The crowds come rushing out of the sliding doors of the subway trains like a tidal wave as you are waiting on the platform, elbows and shoulders pushing, and before they have passed another tidal wave sets in from the other direction, from the platform into the car, and you go in with it. You may not have intended to, but you do. Finally you get hold of your strap, and find that stranger, the one the fates have appointed, standing on your feet and reading your neighbor's newspaper over your shoulder. With a lurch backward and a jab somewhere in your anatomy you are presently in the streets of the city, where the same human surf breaks day in and day out, and retires at night only to rush back in the morning as though the great deeps were broken up.

The crowd to most of us is a nuisance, and there is more than a touch of contempt in our voices when we say that, because, you see, we have learned to know the American people for what they are. They chew gum, and read things you see on the newsstands. They are 14 years old by intelligence tests, and prefer jazz to music and the talkies to literature. When you add all them together and send them to the polls, such as desire to go there, you have democracy, which as someone recently said is "government by them that don't know."

I think that is our modern temper. I do not find any tenderness there that would remind one of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are living in a universe of debauchery, of mediocrity, of chicanery, and collapse. Men are coming together in assemblies to have their ears grow longer. Criminals are guaranteed full coöperation and protection of the law. Our mood just now is rather cynical, and no little snobbish.

When Jesus saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. Would not it be better if you and I were moved a bit by them? Cynicism is too frequently born in shallow souls, and snobbishness is the virtue of narrow dispositions.

That old Negro spiritual is marked by a greater depth of humanity than some of us ever achieved: "I got wings, you got wings, all God's chillun got wings." A sort of quaint and beautiful respect for human life and for the worthwhileness, value and sacredness of human personality! The experiment we need more than any other today is just the experiment of a great compassion: compassion for all the souls that are harassed and exploited; defrauded souls that parade up and down with all their tinsel in the mud, bedraggled, limp, with all the glory and gilt of life knocked off, until the places in their hearts that used to know hope know it no more.

Here is one of these scattered, distressed ones giving the summary of his life:

"Whatever my life has been, comedy or high tragedy or maybe just plain farce, one thing I am determined: it is what it is, and if I am wise I can enjoy it."

That is the end of his book. This is the beginning of it:

"At the heart of man's discontent there are moments of blank misgiving in which he finds that the civilization of which he is a part has left a dusty taste in his mouth. He may be busy with many things, but suddenly he discovers one day he is no longer sure that they are worth doing."

He is much preoccupied, but he is not sure he knows why. He is involved in an elaborate routine of pleasure, but it does not amuse him much. He finds it hard to believe doing any one thing is better than doing anything at all. It occurs to him it is a great deal of trouble to live. And surveying the flux of events and the cadences of his own soul he concludes that perhaps Aristophanes was thinking of him when he wrote:

"Whirl is king, having driven out Zeus."

Whirl is King in Religion!

Sometimes whirl does seem to be king, having driven out God.

I remember a little group with which I sat some time ago, about 20, I think, and they were thoughtful people that called themselves mystics. They were sitting in a room that somehow seemed quite remote from the evening rush hour just outside; waiting in silent meditation till some philosopher with a serene face, who sat at one end of the room with his eyes closed, should rise and speak to them.

After a while he did stand, and in broken and foreign accents he began, and they all leaned forward and took notes lest anything escape them. Restless they were, puzzled, not knowing what was the matter with life, but quietly certain something was wrong, taking notes. One by one all the religions of mankind were passed in review, the God of Abraham and of Islam, Buddha, Christ, one by one, and in the hands of this philosopher these religions sank into the grave. And then he began to move out into the mystic beyond like a ghost, beyond men, beyond the universe, beyond all gods into the place where words began to grow deep because they lost their meaning, and it was he, and neither was the other and both, and we all felt philosophic and unconscious, and put it down in our notebooks, and went home after meditating a while. The next time he would give us a new faith, now that the Almighty was dead and nobody obeyed him any longer. This new faith was called religious atheism, which was the thing our age was waiting for.

I wish I could convey to you some sense of the futility that settled down over that meeting like a funeral pall. I was just a spectator, but again and again my lungs ached for one breath of Galilean air. Twenty men and women

sitting there hardly a hundred yards from the robust commonplace of the Bowery, sitting there listening to a curly white beard planning to redeem human life with that!

Whirl is king, having driven out God. And when HE saw the multitudes he had compassion on them because they were scattered like sheep that had no shepherd! It does not sound so inappropriate, does it? The more we try to generalize ourselves with this life around us the more deeply we are persuaded that is the pathos of it, its tragedy and bewilderment.

WHIRL IS KING IN MORALS!

And especially is that true just now in the realm of morals.

Certainly the most serious enmity which Christianity has to face is that which has been widely held and advertised with flare of trumpets as moral perplexity.

I know you have remarked in your own life how quickly in the last decade the scene has shifted from that which we used to call the conflict between science and religion; how quickly that issue, if you please, has been replaced by another far more vital in its bearing on human life. I do not think you have much enthusiasm now for trying to reconcile the first few pages of Genesis with the theory of evolution. You are not running about breathlessly trying to reconcile the cosmology of the Bible with the deductions of astronomers. The world has gone on about its business. It does not even have time to stop and smile a little when some new psychologist appears Wednesday and scraps everything the old ones said last Wednesday week.

Some time ago there appeared in the "New York Times" an article on this new and interesting theory that while some men still make monkeys of themselves, no monkey ever yet made a man of himself. We do not have time to stop and laugh. In fact, this is the more marked and interesting just at the time when all that sense of inspiration and infallibility that used to attach to the Bible and church had been transferred to scientists. After all, science does not give us any knowledge of the intrinsic nature of things, and Mr. Spengler came out and used the word "scientific" in a blissful way as being synonymous with "mythological," a myth in which electricity and law had taken their place. It has been said that the most pressing task of the 20th century is to get rid of this superficial system of cosmology. We hardly smile.

Let me read you the concluding paragraph of a series of lectures by one of the world's outstanding astronomers. I want to show you to what state these so-called facts have got, and the conclusions that used to be drawn from them. Here are phrases from one of the concluding paragraphs:

"Appear . . . Hypothesis . . . I do not hold this as secure . . . I hesitate even to advocate it as probable . . . Simply trying, not knowing whether it is a false sense or true . . . No conclusion . . . I wish I might think I had made even a beginning."

Honestly, a man need not revamp many of his ideas of religion because somebody begins to make that kind of noise! No use to define God out of his personality, in spite of certain religious magazines or just because somebody says, "Appear . . . hypothesis . . . obscure"! I think science has at last come to the balances as it brought religion there some 50 years ago.

The conflict is not now so much between science and religion. The scene is shifted, and what is concerning modern life at its heart and center is the daily conduct of men and women, and what threatens to come of it. We are being told with sufficient insistence that there are no longer any sufficient warrants for the morality of the Ten Commandments, because all those sanctions are gone. The Bible is antiquated literature. The family is scattered in its loyalty. Chivalry has lost its grace because woman, thinking to climb to the level of man, has found it is down, not up. Conscience used to cost men their lives: now you can have it for a song if you can march to the music. The 7th Commandment used to have to do about the purity of personal life, and we have turned that over to psychologists and requested a few comments on the danger of repression, and have taken precautions against what we call infringement. The 8th and 9th about honesty, we have requested the legal profession to enter a few strictures and exceptions, and give us a few footnotes too on the 10th on coveting. So we take care of the Commandments quite well. In fact, it is being seriously suggested in solemn quarters that religion is going to have to withdraw from the field of morals completely: that is the meaning of this trend toward liturgical practice we find in so many of our churches. Because liturgy has no illusion about its usefulness: it is just a varnish putting over ideas we want to preserve against the corroding acids of modernity. Religion stepped into this American scene clothed in the homespun garb of the prophet. It is suggested now that we step out. We have changed the tunic of the shepherd for the comfort of the silken robe; modulated his raucous voice in the wilderness and made out of it a chant.

And so they say they are confused. They do not even know the difference any more between right and wrong. The only definition of what is right they give you is that anything is right that is vital to the public good. There are so many ideas of what is vital to the public good,—capitalism, socialism, communism. Why not atheism, companionate marriage? And they all carry the same slogan, "Pro Bono Publico," a little bit of medievalism which translated means, "Making the world safe for your own hobby."

MODERN SUPERSTITIONS

I have come to a rather strange conclusion, and I am interested to find others coming there: There is not so much confusion in our modern life in this field of morals as some individuals think, but there is a great deal of avoidance.

What do you call this, for instance? Here is Mr. Durant looking out over this perplexed modern life of ours, giving on one page after another his nostrums. Says he:

"In order to straighten out the chaos wise legislation must give us freedom of speech and thought, wise leaders must redeem the abuses of industry. . . . Let people be lifted by great benefactors with civilizing consequence and intelligible teaching."

Do you call that confusion? You may if you like. It looks like avoidance to me. Not bewilderment; sidestepping. I am going to call it superstition, our modern brand of superstition.

There is an old story in the 5th chapter of John about the pool of Bethesda, and that when the waters were troubled who stepped in first would be healed. We are told nowadays that is superstition; that it was caused by intermittent springs; translated into the realm of a miracle it shows superstition. Maybe! What do you call this "wise legislation, wise leadership, wise enterprise"? I have an idea we

have to revamp our notion of what superstition is. Superstition means standing beside something in unreasoning reverence and awe. I submit to you there is little difference between people who stand in awe of the disturbance of the waters and the moderns who stand in awe of human legislation, leadership and enterprise. Our modern hocus pocus! Charms!

It is interesting that this sophisticated age should have transferred its superstitions to things that do not exist, to agencies that do not operate. How about a deep breath of Galilean air as a remedy for our modern confusion?

Let us go back to the story!

Jesus went to the pool and saw the man 38 years in an infirmity, and he said to him:

"Wilt thou be made whole?"

Do not miss the penetration in that question! It was equivalent to saying:

"Do you want to get well?"

I think that is what we have to ask this generation of ours: if people who for 38 years have been enjoying ill health want to get well on the physician's own terms. There are responsibilities that go with moral health, and men don't want to face them. There are great, strenuous tasks both outside the church and inside for every soul that is robust, that just does not want to go soldiering in this great crusade that calls for a quiet mind, a steady hand, and a stout heart.

"Do you want to get well?" He comes to us with those points. That is the core of your message and mine. Do you want to get well, or is all you want the grace to sit still and put up with your infirmity? Illness, whether bodily or spiritual, can become a luxury. You can indulge in paralysis; that is what this man had been doing by the pool. "Do you want to get well?" He did not answer the question, because he could not.

"Master, I have nobody, when the water is troubled, to put me in the pool!"

He wasn't sure about wanting to get well, not yet. We can indulge in spiritual paralysis, and that is what we have been doing. And that is the complacent doom of which Kipling once wrote. The lamp of our youth will be utterly out, but we shall subsist on the smell of it. We shall fold our hands when success comes, and think well of it. We shall be perfectly pleased with our work. That is spiritual paralysis!

"You want to get well?" You and I are holding in our hands a light to which no mind can close its eyes any longer. It wasn't more than four months ago that this same Mr. Durant gave a lecture in Columbia University and offered as the ultimate cure for all our confusion a return to the teaching of Jesus Christ. You cannot side-step him any longer if you are terribly in earnest. And that is why I have such confidence and enthusiasm for the gospel of his life and his presence. Oh to bring all our judgments under the eyes of that Galilean again!

Paul had a trick of doing it. He lived in a world just as confused as ours, perhaps more so; in many of its factors just like ours. There were the old philosophic heads shaking in much doubt as to the way things were going. Seneca, sitting at his desk writing on the tranquillity of the soul and the happy life. Horace, another sort, throwing out his graceful courtly epigrams in praise of the rustic life and simplicity,—you have heard him in our modern life! Juvenal began his 10th satire on the vanity of human wishes, "Hardly anybody is left from Spain to India who could tell the difference between right and wrong." Here came Paul, and he had ideas to resolve all chaos into order. When he got into difficulties he brought it up to a certain presence. What other people thought did not matter much, and he did not trust himself, but there was One who never darkened counsel for him; and if you want something shown up in its right colors take it to him and he will analyze it for you.

You remember Frank Harris? You have read his biography of Shaw? He too could boast that the flood which came from the side of the crucified One had never bathed him, but he came to know at last that not Athens but Jerusalem was the sacred city, and that the roses of life grow best by the cross.

KEEP THE GOSPEL CLEAR AND UNINVOLVED

"Seeing the multitudes he had compassion on them because they were scattered like sheep having no shepherd." You and I are coming up to such a time, and I want to spend these concluding moments in submitting to you the necessity for keeping the gospel in our hands clear and uninvolved, so that none of its issues are crowded by anything that is not germane.

I am thinking of Matthew 22, where there was a great debate, or question and answer period, on one of the days of Christ's last week. It was not done with any decorum, as our question and answer periods are. It was hot and violent. There were flashes of white heat, and they died down into ugly sneers and satire like the baleful glow of burning sulphur.

I wish you would read that scene, and the two that immediately precede and follow. The pathos of that scene is not the pathos of its bitterness or its cruelty. It does not lie in the cross that those men were building for humanity's king and priest. It lies simply in that same wilful confusion of which I have been talking, that wants to confuse the simple issues of religion by whatever means it can.

There was not any trouble about Jesus and what he did, or about anything he said. The trouble was not with the problem, but with the person; and they invented the problem. The challenge he was throwing at their feet was too direct, they had to find cover, so they involved it in all the controversy that was current, and all the while this Christianity which he came to be was utterly lucid. Look at it!

The first difficulty. It was a practical one which tried to involve him in the field of politics. "Is it right to give tribute to Caesar?"

His answer was not merely an avoidance:

"If you give to God what belongs to him you would have no difficulty deciding what belongs to Caesar."

He meant there were no thumb rules. They were trying to get into the realm of the individual conscience, and he would not transgress by laying down prescriptions.

There is room for that kind of adult treatment in our life among people who go about complaining of the futility of Christianity because it does not tell you what to do in every conceivable circumstance, whom to elect as governor, war, industry, politics, moving pictures, prohibition,—trying to involve it every step of the way. What so many want is some kind of "Read page 243 of the Written Counsels of God" and find out what to do. That is adult treatment. Christ was an adult.

I was preaching a series of five sermons at Chautauqua. Friday morning a woman met me.

"Certainly before you leave you will give us a message on prohibition!"

In fact, she did not call it a message, she called it a gospel.

"You think it is a gospel?"

"Yes, I think it is the gospel of Jesus. Here in the New Testament it says, 'Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's!' Do what your country prescribes!"

"If you go to England with that it means something else. They do not have prohibition over there."

"But please give us a message!"

And I said: "There isn't anybody or anything under God's heaven that is going to change my message for this morning: it is the cross of Jesus Christ!"

Don't let it get involved! It isn't involved.

Study Matthew 22! After the politicians had left the agnostics came along. They had a problem of a woman who had many husbands. She married so often it got to be a habit. Losing husbands amounted almost to genius. It was a neat domestic problem whose she should be in the world to come. If you want you can go on setting up difficulties like that for Christianity until kingdom come.

Or perhaps you would like to have a little try at retelling the story of the creation, because certainly it is apparent to our modern mind that man created God. Then read some psychology! That will help you find out how dangerous it is to repress anything. That will take care of the Sermon on the Mount, you can do anything. Since the day of Tom Paine things have become involved, and we have invented things he never thought of, and it is a perfect Godsend to anybody who wants to avoid this Nazarene. It need not be difficult to people who are not so anxious.

Christianity comes to us with a clear and distinct proposition. It does not argue about anything. Somebody said Jesus discussed nothing and changed everything, and we discuss everything and change nothing. It does not argue about the existence of God or the human soul. It does not argue the origin of evil or the fact of consciousness. If you have any notion at all that you have to straighten these matters out somewhere on the road to becoming a Christian, just remember that for as long as you stop to discuss them you are stopping short of even beginning! The man who refuses to eat until he understands the origin, history and value of food, and who declines to sleep until he can recite what sleep is and how it is produced, is apt to have a bad case of rickets complicated with considerable insomnia! Christianity presents itself frankly, without disguise, as a kind of hypothesis, and we have to keep it there. We have to keep it simple for this bewildered, confused, and scattered folk. Never complicate it!

When it becomes complicated with other things it alienates human affection, confuses human souls, dissipates all the redeeming value it has. Certainly in the Confessions of my own church I hope and pray we may not allow our pronouncements to be turned aside from that One whose clear, unobstructed challenge rings out to your individual soul and to mine. Let us not complicate it with doctrinal difficulties!

You first get by the agitators, then you run into the hesitators. After you are through with them you are brought face up with the formulators. After the politicians and agnostics got through the fundamentalists had a fling.

"What is the great commandment? A debatable subject! Come aside a bit and tell us the great commandment!"

After you have run the gauntlet and get by the folk who mix Christianity with Western civilization and the status quo, then you come to the folk who want a debate about something. Their temperature always rises in inverse proportion to the matter they are debating. It is necessary: of course you and I know that. To have a body of doctrine is inevitable as long as we think, but it is pretty hard lines for a man until he finds out that he can dispense with a good deal of the finer distinctions and undertake the simple, clear, straight fellowship with One who has power to redeem life.

That is simple, and it is a discovery we all can make.

The Living Jesus

I am closing with the story of another little group. I told you about the mystics on the Bowery. I want to tell you about 20 men of us who met some time ago: there are one or two here in this audience.

It was at Milwaukee in a little room at the close of a day's convention. We had given our lives to a great cause years before, and we met there that night to take stock of it. I think for us all it was the high spot of that convention. Almost at random voices were raised, low voices, sometimes faltering voices, to tell the story not of things that did not matter, but of the one thing that did matter, the companionship of a living Christ. Down all the solitary ways of life, in the face of all life's cruel obstacles, the moving of One whose footsteps we could almost hear.

It was rather like that recurring pathway across the moors of Yorkshire, where every now and then you find the ancient paving-stones that led the trudging feet of weary pilgrims so many years ago to Whitby Abbey on its solitary headland above the northern sea. Through those varied settings, men whose task was in the slums, in distant lands, on broad avenues, along country lanes, this recurring solemn pathway that every man's feet had traveled stumbling, for the yearning was in his heart,—Jesus—Jesus—JESUS!

All around the circle in the end we knelt down and prayed one by one, and it was like the fellowship of hands laid upon the hem of his garment, it was the stillness as though of One who was present in the room with us. And through our souls there ran a strange new current of strength as of a great commission.

"Jesus! Jesus!"—that is a simple gospel, isn't it? God keep it so forever!

The Words of Jesus

Elvet Lewis

Sweet the words of Jesus,
Life for you and me;
They will light us safely
To eternity.
New are they for ever,
Full of heavenly grace,
Firmer than the mountains,
Outlast time and space!

Knowledge ever changes
With the love of man,
But his Word abideth,
Change it never can.
Lord is he, and leader,
Who can never fail;
Long as stands creation
Will his cross prevail.

As we to him listen
God we come to know;
By believing in him
Life begins to glow;
In his smile's pure radiance
Death's fell terrors cease;
In his truth there's comfort,
And eternal peace!

God being accessible, the next question arises, How in actual experience? The answer of natural religion and of the Mosaic system is through a human priesthood. The author of Hebrews shows that Christ is the one perfect priest.

An Expository Study of the Epistle to the Hebrews

3. The Priesthood of Christ

Rev. Alexander C. Purdy, D.D., Hartford Theological Seminary

YESTERDAY morning we thought of that rather strange conception in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is our study, "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God." We tried to see how, underlying forms of thought somewhat foreign to us, this writer was attempting to express convictions which are timeless in their significance. We tried to give that word "rest" a content which would partake of that timeless character. The author of the epistle did not simply voice his deep conviction that fellowship with God, as he ventured to paraphrase his expression of the word "rest," is a present possibility and a future realization, but he proceeded to help his hearers to open their eyes to the way for the realization of that fellowship with God.

We thought yesterday on the theme "Is God Accessible?" to which he gave a triumphant affirmative answer. We are going on today to open up the great theme which is the central theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews, his treatment of the priesthood of Christ: for it was by thinking of Christ as priest that he believed men could enter into fellowship with God. Christ had opened a new and living way to God.

He was writing apparently to readers who were hungry for the assurance of access to God, of fellowship with him in some real way; whose problem was not so much intellectual in the sense of needing assurance as to the existence of God or his great acts in history, but rather a small group of Christians in the first century who missed from the Christian worship that richness, that sense of access to God which the old priestly system had seemed to afford; and he was dealing with that problem.

If God is accessible, how are we actually to draw near to him?

The ancient answer, not only among Hebrews but everywhere, was that we draw near to God in the persons and through the acts of the duly appointed priests. The ancient answer was the priesthood with all that it meant. It brought men to God. And the epistle to the Hebrews is the epistle of priesthood. The author's aim is to show Christ as the perfect priest through whose sacrifice we draw near to God.

Prophet and Priest

In Protestantism we have learned to contrast the prophet and priest in favor of the former.

The prophet, we say, stands on the manward side of God: he comes forth from God to man. The priest stands on the Godward side of man: he leads men to God.

The prophet faces us, his back toward God, thrust forth by the pressure of the divine hand. The priest faces God for us with his back to us. It is literally so in all priestly worship. His face is toward God.

The prophet announces the nature and demands of God. The priest accepts the nature and demands of God, he gives no new conception of the divine, but he represents his presentation as to God in and through himself. In symbol we find access to God. This was certainly the ancient conception.

Now it is on the basis of this widespread view of the priest and his function that our author writes. Perhaps he himself shared to some extent this deep feeling of the need for the priestly in religion. At any rate, whether he shared it or was using the conception, the idea is simply to convey his message, a form for giving his message. That is the nature of the form.

This great portrait, the presentation of the significance of Christ, begins at 4. 14:

"Having then a great high priest . . . let us hold fast our profession!"

Remember, we said the key expression so far as the exhortation of this epistle goes is that phrase "Hold fast"! The central idea of faith is the notion of loyalty, and it runs through this letter: the will to hold fast, not simply as an act of the will, the girding of our loins and the dogged determination to be loyal to the Christian message, but the will to hold fast because we have a great high priest, "Jesus the Son of God, who has passed through the heavens, . . . for we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!"

Then he goes on in the first 10 verses of the 5th chapter to develop the theme of Christ's priesthood by suggesting the qualifications of a true priest and how they are fulfilled in Christ.

Priestly Qualifications Fulfilled in Christ

"For every high priest being taken from among men." One who represents men rises out of our humanity; not one who is thrust forth from God. "For every high priest being taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God." He stands on the Godward side of men "that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins . . . so also for himself, to offer for sins" (5. 1-3).

Then the second qualification: "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Here in characteristic fashion the author finds the substance of his argument in the Old Testament scripture. Characteristically he reverts thither for the structure of that argument in the true manner of the earliest exegesis. "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest. . . . Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec" (5. 5, 6).

A superb passage, and one well worth our attempt to get below the surface of the form in which this author's argument is presented, and try to come to grips with the substance of his conviction, and see if it has meaning for us and our ministry today!

Let us look at these verses a little more in detail before I go on with what I want to speak of!

"A priest after the order of Melchisedec," 5. 6; and 4. 14, "Having then a great high priest." It is interesting to note the literary method of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. I spoke the first hour of the massive, careful way in which his thought proceeds: not at all like the rushing, torrential logic of Paul, but a slow, massive, careful thinking. And his method is this: When he is going to introduce a theme he touches it lightly once or twice before he comes to its full treatment. So in speaking of the high priest he has already introduced that theme. Yesterday I outlined the first chapters of this epistle: how he begins by pointing out the superiority of the Son to the angels, then the superiority to Moses himself, the great founder of the faith, but in the 3d chapter he already hinted he was going to move on to this idea of priesthood. How casually he introduced it, without developing it at that point: 3. 1, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus!" He simply prepares the minds of the readers for later development.

So in the treatment of the Melchisedec speculation he prepares the way by hitting a light note before striking a major chord: "Having a great high priest who passed through the heavens," 4. 14. That is not a rhetorical phrase, but it had significance in the thought of the world of that day. It is not a geographical term simply, but he is making it definitely clear in a world which was obsessed with ideas of mediators. As the high priest in the Jewish system passed through and made his way into the holy of holies, so our high priest is not a priest of the outer court, but he has made his way through the heavens, all of them. Anyone who knows the background knows those words are carefully chosen:

"Having then a great high priest who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession!"

And verse 15 gives us ground for holding fast, because we are sure of his sympathy, help and understanding, though he is exalted. That lies close to the heart of the Christian gospel, and he is emphasizing it throughout the chapters that follow. Although Christ is exalted, yet he has undergone human experience. That God in Christ has come to grips with history lies in the background of this thought.

Let me read this verse with these preliminary suggestions! "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Therefore, in view of his exaltation, and yet with his sympathy (16), "let us come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need!" This great conception of an exalted Christ, in whom and through whom we find a living way into the heart of reality, who bears with him our troubled humanity, is one of the sublime ideas of Hebrews.

We think of those verses of Browning where he tells of the parish priest who climbed up in the high church steeple to be nearer God. He daily wrote out what he thought was sent from heaven, and dropped it on the people's heads. In his old age God said:

"Come down and die!"

And he cried out from the steeple: "Where art thou, Lord?"

The Lord replied: "Down here among thy people!"

That catches the conception of this author. His great thought is of a Christ, a Son, a revealer, a redeemer who opens up the living way to the heart of the universe, and yet who bears humanity with him on that way. He understands, and because of that and only because of that may we dare with boldness to approach the throne of grace.

One knows persons who exhibit considerable boldness in approaching the throne of grace, but they often have forgotten one or other of the great qualifications. They have forgotten the awe and wonder which must characterize such an approach, or else they have forgotten the sympathy and tenderness with which Christ opened up that way and bore our humanity with him. These ideas are certainly present in this passage.

CHRIST AS HIGH PRIEST

But someone asks: "How can you say Christ was high priest?"

In the opening verses of the 5th chapter this question is answered. It is correct to think of Christ as high priest.

What are the qualifications of a high priest?

The first four verses answer that question.

First, he must be one who sees sin and what it is, and has the courage to call it sin, and yet who has tenderness, that sympathy with men, that fellow feeling.

In the second place he must be called of God. Christ fulfilled these two qualifications, 5. 5, 6.

Then he goes on to show how Christ met the other qualifications. "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers . . . . yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered," 7, 8. Certainly the idea is not that Christ in his earthly life learned its obedience, but he learned the content of obedience. He entered into some of our human experiences, into what the contents of that obedience meant in terms of humanity. He rose out of our life in a true sense, and he learned through suffering—the schoolmaster of every man and every woman,—what the content of obedience was. Not to be obedient, but what in human experience the content of obedience was.

"And having been made perfect," 9. I suggested yesterday that the word translated "perfect" does not anywhere mean moral perfection. It is perfectly clear that the author is not intending to say that through suffering Christ was made morally perfect. The word means here—its root meaning, that is,—something that carries through to a goal. By learning the content of obedience, what it meant in human life and in the terms of our life to be obedient, he was qualified to lead us to that goal. By that experience he became unto all them that obeyed him the author of eternal salvation, a high priest after the order of Melchisedec, 10.

The whole problem of religion is in a real sense the human approach to God. This epistle is an attempt to assure men that for them a way has been opened up into the presence of God, that they may find access to God. It is an utter mistake to think that this writer any more than Paul conceives of salvation as something come from God by Christ. The whole plan of salvation is the plan of God, and though approaching from the human side he emphasized throughout it was God who named Jesus to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec.

This emphasis is coming back into religion today. As a Quaker I might be expected to shy a little at the rather Calvinistic emphasis which this seems to suggest, but I do not shy at it. It is certainly of the essence of our Christian faith.

You remember that Mark Twain in "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur" has a cruel picture of what the Yankee did with a certain saint. The saint was forever at his devotions, bowing to the ground, swaying backward and forward. As the Connecticut Yankee watched him he was much troubled to see so much energy going to waste. Finally he got the saint to stand in one spot to perform his devotions. He rigged a harness to him, and by an ingenious device attached it to a belt and the wheel of a sawing machine, and then let him go. He turned out 50 dozen boards. That was religion that worked, that produced the goods.

We have been obsessed in this century with the thought of a religion that is a technique for getting the goods. Religion accordingly has become a sort of supplementary discipline. If you can get goods in one way, all right, but it may be there are certain goods which our modern civilization cannot produce. Accordingly we will say to religion to produce those goods. But though religion far too often has technique for getting the goods of life, it may well be that religion is not at all a technique for getting what we call the goods. Religion in its great moments in history has seemed to rise up and speak to the hearts of men when all their goods were being taken from them. What they called the goods of life were not produced at all by religion. The idea that religion is a kind of technique by which we may use the celestial forces to produce things we want has received a decided blow in these times.

We need the conception of a God who operates on a cosmic scale, whom we do not control, who is not a projection of our little ideas upon the clouds of time but who is working in history, and our salvation depends upon a discovery of his ways and coöperation with him. While I say this author is always thinking of the needs of men and their thirst for fellowship with God, yet it is God himself who meets that need. It is God himself through Christ who opens up the way to fellowship with him.

PRIESTLY SYMBOLISM PERFECTED IN CHRIST

You may say: "This idea of the priesthood of Christ certainly seems foreign to our Protestant way of thinking. Jesus did not call himself a priest, did not ask men to think of him that way. Paul set forth his experience of Christ in moral, theological, ethical terms; not in terms of ritual."

I do not wonder people shy at this idea central in Hebrews, so full of the language of ritual, so full of bloody sacrifice, so full of the sacrificial system that at first thought it seems rather remote from the main currents of our life today.

See what the author is doing! This man is not proposing that this group shall go back to the old priestly system. The question of law is secondary. With what conclusiveness and decisiveness does this author deal with the whole law! He says in 7. 19, "For the law made nothing perfect." Again in 10. 13 he said, "It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sin." That is final. He is not proposing for a moment to return to that ancient system. He is saying to all ritualists, to all men of his day, of our day, of every day, who feel the attraction of the richness of outward form and ceremony, he is saying to all such:

"My criticism is not that you go too far, but you do not go far enough. The high priest once a year goes into the holy of holies."

We must not minimize that great day amidst the gorgeous ceremony, that day of atonement when the high priest entered the holy of holies which for a year had been closed. Many men it seemed felt in a real sense they had entered into the presence of God himself. But it was only once a year. It had been repeated time and time again so that it was vague, it was unsatisfying, it did not meet with the great deep hunger of men. He is saying that in Jesus, on the contrary, not through ceremony or in a moment of time, but in and through an entire life and death, in and through personality, a way has been opened up inside the life of men, inside history, a new and living way (that is his great phrase,) which is available ever and always. God is accessible to men. Think of Christ as a priest, think of his life in its wholeness and entirety, think of his will dedicated to the Father, and we see in the symbolism of the priestly a timeless and eternal priestly office through which we enter to God.

The writer is on the way toward the fourth Gospel. Personally I think the Epistle to the Hebrews in its thought lies between Paul and the fourth Gospel. The fourth Gospel with its conception of the Word pictures life and everything incident in a life, every word a window into the eternal. So this writer who is on the way only approaches from this point of view. He sees a priestly system, its symbolism, richness, beauty, attractiveness, and sees every symbol completed, perfected, brought to its goal in the life of Christ. And that is the message which we Protestant Christians have to give to all ritualists,—not that they have gone too far, but that we all do not go far enough; that every common bush is aflame with God; that only he who sees takes off his shoes, the rest sit back.

Life in all experiences has that possibility, but today such is the nature of men that times and seasons have their place, that rights and ceremonies sanctioned by centuries and wearing the dignity and impressiveness and beauty of centuries have special significance; but we do insist that the line of spiritual progress and the development of the spirit of man are that his eyes may be opened to see in all life and experience this new and living way that leads to the heart of God.

It is rather striking that the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is certainly the most ritualistic in its terminology of all New Testament writings, apparently has only passing reference to the great sacrifice of the church. It would be improper to say that the writer of the epistle was in any sense denying the significance of the sacrifice of the Lord's Supper. But he is rather picturing through this symbol of the priesthood of Christ the original opportunity and possibility that lies before the Christian to find all life sacramental, to find the divine at the heart of every experience, to pass (as it were) through the outer courts of every experience to find

at its center the meaning, the presence of God himself. Christ has opened up that new and living way.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF MELCHISEDEC, AND OF THE BELIEVER

The 7th chapter has always intrigued me. Every preacher has at some time or other dealt with Melchisedec. He is an attractive figure. Let us read from 7. 1! The writer touches it once or twice before, and now he strikes the main chord.

"For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, . . . without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life . . ."

Certainly this author is not saying that back in the timeless history there had been one who had no father, no mother, no birthday, no day of death. That was not the idea at all: it would have been to exalt Melchisedec, to put him on a level of the figure he was trying to interpret. The last phrase gives the key to its meaning, "Without father, without mother, without genealogy." That was an extremely striking thing in a system where genealogy was a vital thing. In the priesthood a man was a priest because he was born in the priestly line. Abraham is returning from the slaughter of the kings, this mysterious figure of Melchisedec meets him, and it is an amazing thing and always has been, as the 110th Psalm indicated, that it is not at all clear who his father and mother were, or when he died, yet he was a priest of God. He was before the institution of the Mosaic priestly line, before Aaron, before Levi, before the Levitical priesthood or the Aaronic line of priests. In the dim mists of history there was a certain priest of God not in any priestly line, and yet Abraham paid him a tithe.

He goes on to say this man is a figure of Christ. What did he mean? Was it just a clever trick of exegesis? Was that all? Was there nothing else in his mind, nothing deeper that he was trying to set forth? I am sure there was.

Dare one say that behind this exegesis there was a great conviction that there is such a thing in all history as we may call the priesthood of personality? That all through history there have been men and women who have stood on the Godward side of human life? Who is there here this morning who would not confess that in his own life there have been men and women and children who have been standing on the Godward side of our lives pulling us to God, drawing us nearer to him: not because of any official appointment, not because they are in the line accredited to priesthood, but because God's hand is upon them, which had drawn them out in sacrificial loving service, and they draw us to God?

Every man stands in direct open relation through Christ with God. Is there not a priesthood which belongs to the church and to all those who have heard the name of Christ, who have taken it upon their lips, a priesthood which is a service to others? Those who stand on the higher side of their fellows' lives, the rush of whose lives is to the divine? What is it makes a man great? Is it not the rush of his life: not the man himself, but what comes to our minds, what lays hold of our consciences, when we are in his presence? That, I think it is not pressing the passage too much to suggest, lies implicit in this idea of the Melchisedec priesthood.

Christ made a priest for time after the order of Melchisedec, Christ who entered into human life, bearing it up, opening a new and living way into the presence of God; Christ who stands on the Godward side of every man's life, who through the pressure of God's hand, through the act of God's will, presents men to God. Is that not a message for us to present in our day and our time?

That I think was the central idea in the great message of the priesthood forever after the order of Melchisedec. The author has no theory of atonement, if by theory of atonement you mean a definitely worked-out intellectual system of how Christ brings men to God, but the act of God's will himself. It is an analogy, and yet here and there all through there is this suggestion that out of our humanity, bearing our humanity in a real sense, Christ is opening up a way to God.

Isn't it possible for us to enter into this experience? I am convinced there is something fundamentally important for humanity here, there is something at the heart of the priestly service of Christ's ministers today. There is fear of a kind of mediation which goes too far, but it ought to be fear of a kind of ministry which never moves far enough, which relies upon the trappings and paraphernalia of our ministry, the officialdom of our ministry which rests back upon that sort of thing. We need to study the epistle to understand what priesthood means in Christ and his life and death, that we may in truth become in some sense priests of the Most High after the order of Melchisedec.

(To be continued)

What has reason to do with faith? This is a forceful assertion of the place and power of reason as the ground of Christian faith. "Faith is a consent of the will to testimony regarded as valid."

Faith and Reason

HENRY W. RANKIN, SWANTON, VERMONT

YOU sometimes hear it said: "It is just as impossible to argue a man out of religion as to argue him into it."

But men are argued out of religion and into religion every day, and always have been since there were men to reason. It is only because he is a rational, reasoning being that religion has any appeal for man. It does not appeal to a brute. But men so low down that they are called brutal yield to rational considerations when they submit to God and accept Christ. It takes more than reason to make a man religious, but not less.

Many men will not listen to reason, but when ready to listen they may find Christ and all that goes with him.

Perhaps not directly, but indirectly our theory of world-order is the background of whatever faith we have. A correct theory of world-order, in the measure it is correct, is

congruous with the Christian faith, corroborates and strengthens it. A false theory in its degree weakens and destroys faith. This is what makes the importance of getting a theory as correct as we can. The modern assumption of a naturalistic universe, taught in all our leading colleges, has made sceptics, agnostics, pantheists and atheists of countless students within our own observation, as in that case told in the "Atlantic Monthly" for last June, "What College Did to My Religion."

All the British founders of the great modern dogma of evolution were brought up in Christian homes, and repudiated not only Christianity but even theism on becoming convinced by reasons, though the reasons were bad, that man was not created in the image of God, but generated by a beast.

If Christianity is not a reasonable religion it isn't even good; but it is the most reasonable of all religions, and the better we understand its reasons for being, the more likely we are to stay in it.

How many times in the book of The Acts are we told that Paul went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews, some of whom believed and some did not! In Athens he reasoned with the Greeks, most of whom did not believe, but some did.

It is Paul who tells us to prove all things, hold fast the good, reject the bad. It is Peter who tells us to have reason for the hope that is in us, and to add knowledge to our faith. The epistles of both men are filled with rational considerations, and this is argument.

All the Hebrew prophets reasoned with the people addressed, and complained that they did not consider; yet a few did. "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord," says Isaiah.

These words may well be the Preface to the whole Bible. For the whole Bible is an argument of God addressed to man, and has all the proper effect of an argument for those who accept it. The Bible is primarily testimony to matters of fact uttered and recorded by competent witnesses, with their comments, or God's comments on the historical facts. All such history is an argument.

If the four Gospels present authentic history of the deeds and words of Christ, of his life and death and resurrection, that history exerts on willing minds rational persuasion of the strongest kind that results in faith. Faith is a consent of the will to testimony regarded as valid. Such faith supplies the moral condition indispensable to religious experience. Once this experience is reached we have the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God.

This inward witness, of which we thus gain an experience, may be only initial and rudimental, or may yield the full assurance of understanding. It may be slight, or strong and vivid. It may even bring into consciousness an overpowering impression of God's presence, love and guidance, and Christ himself may unmistakably manifest himself to us and in us, as he did to Paul the apostle, to D. L. Moody, to Finney and Tauler, and I think to Luther, and many more. There are degrees of this experience from that of the babe in Christ to that of the full-grown man in Christ, though most of us are dwarfs in Christ. Just so far we grow, and then we stop growing.

But before any experience of this kind is possible we must have the faith that consents to that testimony, and the testimony must be reasonable to win a reasonable faith. Coleridge defines faith as consent of the will to assent of the understanding: the best definition I have learned. It is the ground of hope, the moral condition on which we may hope, and the conviction of things not seen, yet more real than things visible. But it must be a rational conviction, amenable to reason. In science and religion alike faith comes of hearing testimony, which testimony may be true or false, by which testimony faith may be strengthened or may be deceived. To our faith we must add knowledge, and make sure of our rational grounds.

The young student in the "Atlantic Monthly" first accepted the testimony of his father and his pastor, and believed as they believed. He then went to Harvard, and accepted the testimony of his teachers, who led him astray. But in neither case did he investigate for himself the credentials on which were based the conflicting testimonies he had heard. His father may not have been able to tell all the reasons for his own faith, though founded on the best of reasons and corroborated by experience. His professors gave reasons, but bad reasons, for his consent—or faith—to some quite different propositions, conflicting with the first. He supposed that college taught him to think for himself, whereas he had merely exchanged one set of authorities for another, and up to the time of writing believed with a blind and credulous uncritical faith in the say-so of the men about him.

His story is highly representative of most college youth today. The best of reasons governed his father's faith, but his father did not know them well enough to teach the son. Bad reasons governed the faith of his college teachers, who supposed them good because they never mastered the contrary evidence. But that evidence is available to both teachers and students, plenty of it in the college library; but the reading of most men follows the line of least resistance, and they are unwilling to face unwelcome truth.

There is usually no religious experience without faith, and no faith without testimony, and no testimony but needs sifting. Reason, whether good or bad, enters intimately into all faith, though not always consciously; and reason is set forth by arguments great and little. That religious experience is best that acts most fully on the best reasons, and takes pains to learn what these are.

The religious experience of most young people is subject to all the vicissitudes of teaching. Few are those who go deep enough into the reasons to gain durable and adequate convictions.

There are notable instances of men who began as infidels and scoffers, and who set out to discredit Christianity, but who in order to do that first read the Bible with close attention, and then the historical evidences of the faith they aimed to destroy, and the metaphysical evidences of theism, until truth burst convincingly on their minds, and they became powerful defenders of the faith and confessors of Christ.

One such man was George Bowen, than whom India never had a more exalted example of Christian faith and life.

One was Guizot, the French statesman, who, accepting Gibbon's testimony to the sources of Christianity in the 14th and 15th chapters of his "History of Rome," planned a French edition of that work. But the research stimulated by Gibbon convinced him that Gibbon's account of Christianity was worthless, and Guizot's edition of Gibbon was a vindication of the New Testament.

Another such man was Lew Wallace, who wrote "Ben Hur." Beginning at the suggestion of Robert Ingersoll a

(Please turn to page 120)

The Bible is a big subject. How would you discuss it if you were addressing an audience of preparatory school girls? Follows what one speaker said!

What about the Bible?

Rev. Albert G. Butzer, Buffalo, N. Y.

The World's Best-Seller

WE HEAR a great deal about best-sellers in the realm of books. If a new book achieves a circulation of 100,000, that is considered most unusual. If it achieves a circulation of 500,000, that is considered phenomenal. If it achieves a circulation such as "All Quiet on the Western Front," which ran into something like 3,000,000, that is looked upon as an almost unprecedented event in the realm of bookselling.

We are to think now about a book which has been the world's best-seller not over a period of a few months, or a few years, but over a period of centuries. Nineteen hundred years after its latest portions were written this book was sold and distributed in whole or in part (1930) at the rate of some 90,000 copies a day, or over 33,000,000 in the year. There are two publishing houses which say they alone have issued in the time of their existence over 700,000,000 copies.

Moreover, this book has been translated in whole or in part into every language known among men, and into some 400 dialects of these languages: over 900 in all.

So it is that Dean Brown says: "On the basis of its wide currency alone the Bible ought to commend itself to the most thoughtful consideration of all people."

First Choice

When Theodore Roosevelt was going to Africa to be buried in the jungles there for some time he made out a selective list of books which he desired to take with him. There were only six of them, and the Bible was at the top of his list of six.

A number of years ago an English periodical asked a distinguished company of men to make out a list of what they considered to be the hundred best books that were ever written. In this company were men like John Morley, Leslie Stevens, Herbert Spencer, Frederick Harrison, Thomas Huxley,—men who were not given to complain when religious things were at stake,—and yet in every list that was submitted the Bible was the first, even on the lists of these men whose names I have just mentioned. So we might go on reminding ourselves with many quotations and references as to the popularity of this book in the worldwide esteem in which it is held.

And yet side by side with this great popularity of the Bible there runs an abyssmal ignorance of it. So many people use the Bible for an ornament. They like to have a great big gilt-edged copy of it to grace the living room table, or be stowed away on a book shelf, but they seldom take it down and open it and read it. Questionnaires show there is abyssmal ignorance not only among old folks, but perhaps more particularly among young people today. I am not saying that knowing a lot of facts about the Bible is so virtuous, but I do think the Bible is a closed book to a large number of people today. They are just not getting into it at all.

How Did We Get the Bible?

If we were to turn this group into a class this morning and ask, "How did we get our Bible?" I wonder how many of you could give an intelligent, straightforward answer? Let not your heart begin to palpitate,—I am not going to do that just now!

Seriously though, let us ask ourselves if we really know, as young people brought up in Christian homes, Sunday schools and churches, and attending this conference, if someone did approach us and ask us how we got our Bible if we could give an intelligent answer.

Two or three years ago when I was coming back from preaching in Scotland I fell in with two young men, Mormons. I was quite set up by the fact that I had been preaching in Scotland, but they took me down when they said they had spent three years in Germany preaching about Mormonism. They told me this rather significant thing: all young people of the Mormon faith, when they are graduated from college, are expected to spend the first three years preaching Mormonism, paying their own expenses. These two young men had gone to Germany, and were just coming back after spending three years preaching Mormonism every place where an opportunity presented itself. I said to myself at the time, Is it to be wondered at that Mormonism is growing rapidly, and has such a vigorous missionary emphasis? How many Christian young people would be willing to spend the first three years of their lives after college, paying their own expenses, propagating their faith?

These Mormon young men told me about those plates which were found by Joseph Smith in northern New York, on which was set down the constitution of Mormonism; and they believed it. I had read it in books, but I had never heard anybody tell with their own lips what they believed about those plates. They must have been dropped from the sky, they say, put there by God in some miraculous manner, and then discovered by Joseph Smith.

A great many people think of the Bible in such terms. They think of it as a book miraculously let down from the sky. But of course thoughtful people know better.

In the second century after the birth of Christ in a council of Jewish leaders the Old Testament was closed, so to speak, and the books of the Old Testament, substantially as we know them now, were set up as the sacred scriptures of the Hebrew people.

As you look at the New Testament Matthew is the first book, then Mark, Luke, and John, and you may get the impression that the four Gospels were the first books to be written in the New Testament. That is not so. Scholars tell us the first writings of the New Testament were two or three epistles of St. Paul.

"Epistle" is simply Greek for a letter, and it is easy to see how these letters of the apostle Paul were written. Paul was a great missionary leader. As he moved across Asia Minor planting churches and passing on, he found occasion

to write letters to these churches he had established. He kept in touch with them. He would write letters about various things happening in those churches. Sometimes he blessed, sometimes he rebuked, a great part of the time he gave advice.

When a little church received a letter from the apostle Paul it was a great event, and of course it was read in church on Sunday morning. Then perhaps it was posted in the vestibule of the home in which the church was held. By and by it was taken from the wall and tucked in along with the Jewish scriptures. As other letters came along they were put in, and can't you see how naturally those letters might find their way into the Hebrew Bible?

Later on the Gospels came into being. At first there was no need for the Gospels. All the early Christians expected Jesus to come again within a short time, and when he did not return the church launched into a great missionary movement, and found it necessary to have some written records of the life of Jesus. The earliest one of these records which we have at present is called "The Sayings of Matthew." The earliest Gospel to be written is that which bears the name of Mark. Mark was a great friend of Peter. By the end of the fourth century in a council the Christian church adopted the Bible substantially as we have it today.

GOD'S PART

I know what some of you are saying. "All you have been talking about is human. You have been giving the impression that the Bible developed like any other literature; there is nothing sacred, supernatural about it. Where is God in all this?"

With all my heart I believe that God was in it from the beginning, and all through it. With all my heart I believe that when Amos delivered his first prophecy God inspired him, and the same with Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all the other sacred writers. When Paul wrote his letters God inspired him to write as he did. When the Gospel records were written God was inspiring the writers.

Someone has said that aspiration brings forth inspiration and revelation. To quote from Dr. Scherer, while man was working up, while man was aspiring toward God, reaching out after him, God was working down to man, reaching after him. I should be inclined to say that this movement from above came first, and then this movement from below, and as the two came together you have the result of that great coöperative movement between God and man.

That brings up the question, How did this inspiration take place? How did God work through the sacred writers?

The Bible does not say how. There are two theories.

One is known as the dictation theory. Many good people today still believe that theory, that God dictated to the sacred writers what they were to put down; and such people believe that the Bible is the word of God from cover to cover. I haven't any quarrel with anybody who can believe that, but there are a good many who cannot believe it. So alongside that dictation theory I would like to put another theory.

We might call it the dynamic theory of inspiration. It is the Spirit of God working through the hearts and minds of men of old just as he is working upon the hearts and minds of multitudes today. He is not lifting them out of their physical and human framework, but working through them as best he can as human beings, with all of their limitations.

If you accept this theory you have to make allowance for the human element running all through the Bible. You have to make allowance for the times in which it was written, the historical and scientific background, and all of that. God did not lift these men out of their setting, God used them as they were, and worked through them as best he could.

But you say: "Now you are getting on thin ice! How do we know what is human, how do we know what is divine? How do we know what came from man, how do we know what came from God? How do we know what is true, how do we know what may be false? How can we work our way out of this difficulty?"

How do you know what is white and what is black? By the impression it makes upon your eye, by the appeal it makes to your eye.

I think in the same way you can approach the Bible. How do you know what is the word of God? By the appeal it makes to your own heart and mind. I should say to you that you may know the Bible is the word of God not because it was given by God in some miraculous manner, but because men in all generations have found God in this book as they have found him in no other book; and they have found themselves found by God.

Heinrich Heine said on his death-bed, after a rather hectic spiritual experience:

"This book is well called the word of God, because a man who has lost God can find him in this book, and a man who has never found him can feel the spirit of God moving through its pages."

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

I think we ought to remind ourselves in this connection that the Bible is the progressive word of God: and if you could only hang on to that I think you would save yourself a lot of difficulty, if you have any difficulty.

The Bible in its teachings in some matters starts down low, and moves from one plane to another higher, higher, until at last it culminates in Jesus Christ and in later revelation. You would have an interesting time if you would take an idea, for instance, the doctrine of God, and follow its progress through the Bible.

In the early parts of the Bible suffering is chiefly the result of sin. This is forcefully displayed in Job. His mistaken friends were sure Job had boils because he had sinned. The Bible ends with the Son of God on a cross suffering to save. What a difference!

Jesus reveals this progress in his Sermon on the Mount. "Ye have heard it said by them of old time, An eye for an eye. . . . But I say unto you, . . ."

The apostle Paul said: "When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." That holds true of the Bible development of revealed truth in a precise way.

WHAT YOU MAY FIND

I want to give a few hints as to what young people such as you may find in the Bible for today. There is a lot of help available if we learn to use the Bible.

People can find warning in the Bible,—warning as to sin and what it does to us. A sin like jealousy. Study the life of King Saul from the standpoint of his insane jealousy! See how it started, see what it did to him, and you have a warning there that if you are at all inclined to jealousy you would do well to heed!

There is warning as to squandering opportunities. Jesus gives it in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. Five were wise

and five were foolish. The five foolish ones neglected opportunities, and they lost out miserably at the end.

We have great social warnings here in connection with the writings of the prophets. And the generation of which you are a part will need to study the warnings of the prophets if civilization is to be saved at all.

You can learn beauty of expression. I quote an eminent man who insists that the King James Version of the Bible is the best place to learn beautiful English. So much of our language today is "slanguage."

Study the beauty of the characters! The character of Joseph; and of Esther, whom I like to think of as the girl who could not be spoiled; and that beautiful character of Ruth, a butterfly blown in from the garden of God,—one of the most beautiful idylls that has ever been written! There is of course the Lord Christ, the fairest among ten thousand! Brood over the record of his life, the beauty of it, until its beauty becomes a part of your own soul!

Then there is help for you at every turn of the way. There is hardly an experience of life for which you will not find specific help in the Bible if only you know your Bible.

If you are tempted, what better thing than to brood over the temptation of Jesus? It will make you strong to resist temptation.

If you are weighed down with the common things of life, things that seem common, what better can you do than turn to a passage like the 25th chapter of Matthew and brood over what Jesus had to say about giving a cup of cold water, visiting people in prison, etc. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me!"

You will even find help in the Bible for some of the problems of married life. When you have trouble with your mother-in-law it will be a help to turn to the book of Ruth and see the relationship cultivated between Ruth and her mother-in-law.

Then there are the sterner experiences of life.

When you are faced with suffering, where better can you turn than to the suffering of Jesus for the help you need?

When you are face to face with the inevitable in life, and the bitter cup is given, and life says, "Drink it to the dregs!" and your soul is full of rebellion, young people, if you know the record of Gethsemane it will be a wonderful help to you, and enable you to sweep bitterness out of your soul as you pray:

"Nevertheless thy will, not mine, be done!"

When sorrow hits you, as it will, and you are face to face with the loss of a loved one and the great mystery of death, where else will you find better help than in a psalm like the 23d, "The Lord is my shepherd," and in those wonderful thoughts of Jesus, "Let not your heart be troubled! Ye believe in God: believe also in me!" John 14.

If you know your Bible you can turn to it for help at any time in life, and you will find the peculiar help you need.

How Read the Bible?

First of all, READ the Bible,—READ it! So many of us just don't read it. Many of us just read a verse or two in a hurry and think we are going to get something out of it. We never will. Read it as you read a novel, for an hour or two at a time! Read it by books! Take a book and study all you can about it!

Dr. Charles E. Jefferson says that for years he has made it his custom to take one of Paul's epistles on his vacation. "I live with that epistle day after day during the two months of my vacation, and that is how I really get something out of it."

Read the Bible according to its literary character! If poetry, read it as such! If drama, read it as such! Some one says that when he reads the Bible, especially the gospel records, he likes to take one incident from the life of our Lord, read it over several times, the entire incident, "then I close my eyes and I try to imagine that particular scene, try to create it as vividly as I can before my mind. I have found that as I do that the scene becomes a very part of my life, it becomes alive again for me."

I am pleading for something this morning. I hope as a result of our thinking together some of you will be led to really know your Bible and to make it a beautiful factor in your lives. It is a great book. Make it a great friend of yours!

Faith and Reason

(Concluded from page 117)

story that would reduce the Gospels to mythology, he was led into much original research until the truth of Christ possessed his heart; and he made a splendid picture of the faith he set out to destroy. He was reasoned into faith.

So was Romanes, a close follower of Darwin, who was reasoned out of his early faith, and by better reasons brought back to it, and most heartily confessed:

"The Christian faith is intellectually justifiable. . . . It is Christianity or nothing."

Then there was Lord Littleton, who began as an infidel to study the life of Paul, and became convinced that the character and conversion of Paul can only be reasonably accounted for by the record as it stands.

Many a man's Christian faith has in the last 70 years been either wrecked or vastly weakened by the theory of the universe most popular today, a theory that now underlies all that reconstruction of Scripture which boasts its modern view of the world; a fast dissolving view, its own advocates being witness.

There may be those who think that the great argument of Butler's "Analogy," never refuted and as pertinent today as ever for those who will take pains to master it, is of no value to our common faith. But no man who has mastered that argument ever thought so!

There are those who would reason only from their own private and meager experience, as if the experience of Hebrew prophets and apostles was not greater than their own,—the maximum religious experience of mankind recorded to ground the reasonable faith of all aftertime.

There are those who think the common works of God in nature and man are not enough to prove his eternal power and Godhead and goodness; but the apostle Paul thought them so sufficient that he held inexcusable those Gentiles who failed to see it. The three magnates of Greek thought did see what Paul said they should see, and laid the foundation of sound philosophy for all men to this day.

Reason, says Bishop Butler, is the only faculty we have for judging of anything, even revelation itself.

In the image of God that man shares there can be no separation of the rational and moral nature unless we become insane. Let us go on to the full assurance of understanding, which is only possible, or even the aspiration, to a being no less rational than moral! Every parable uttered by Christ was an implicit argument leading to faith, and supporting faith once found.

Dean Graham's first address dealt with the background of Amos, Hosea and Jeremiah, when urban conditions and increasing wealth seemed to outstrip the moral resources of the people

Old Testament Character Studies

2. Amos and Hosea

Rev. T. W. Graham, D.D., of Oberlin (Ohio) Graduate School of Theology

I HAVE tried to outline for you the significant changes which came about in Palestine in the 8th century B. C., the transformations wrought in a people who moved in that century from a strictly agricultural to a city state with growing market places and rapidly growing and easily gotten wealth that was providing for some, at least, the luxuries of elaborate houses, of well set tables, of clothing that was richer than their ancestors had known. The 8th century forced the Jews to meet new conditions in trade, in politics and in religion, and many of them found that their moral resources were not equal to the tests now coming upon them.

Amos

I have tried to suggest to you the preparation of the man whose judgment upon that civilization is our concern this morning: a man born in a small town on the edge of a desert, trained as a shepherd of scrawny sheep in a territory which demanded that he be concerned not alone with that which he saw, but with the meaning of the things he saw, since life in the desert depends upon understanding what lies back of its sounds and evidences. This man journeyed from the southern kingdom of Judah up into the market places of Israel year after year to dispose of the products of his flock. In his frequent visits to Bethel Amos had become increasingly concerned about the conditions which were giving rise to a city civilization, and with the inevitable results upon humankind of the processes which were forming themselves in the marts of trade, in the courts, in the palace of the king, whose lords and ladies were increasingly concerned with the ministry to the lower sides of life.

The time comes when Amos is so stirred by what he conceives to be the failure of the people of Israel to see the way in which they are going, that he can no longer hold his tongue, and he begins to speak. He begins in that unusual way which is displayed in the first chapter of his book.

I suppose we ought to use our imagination in picturing Amos as he begins to speak in Bethel. Likely he takes his stand at a corner of the market place. There he would have a chance at a larger audience.

He is a rough-looking man, coarsely dressed. His face and hands and bared chest show the effect of those long years of the work in the desert beneath a hot Palestinean sun. He does not have on him the marks of refinement which one may see in the traveled trader from Egypt or Assyria, or in the seafaring Phœnicians who have brought across the Mediterranean the produce which they are bartering in Bethel's market. He certainly does not have on him any marks of the trained religionist. When he begins to talk of religion he talks with none of the advantages had by those who carry the marks, in title and in dress, of training in the things of the spirit. Amos must have looked as strange to the people in the market place of Bethel as a Wyoming sheep-herder would look upon the steps of the City Library at 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue in New York. But when Amos begins to speak men stop to listen.

His first message is one that is designed to tickle the ears of the Israelites. He has hard words to say about all of Israel's neighbors. He is accusing them of crimes which none can gainsay, the punishments for which every one would admit they should be made ready.

He begins at Damascus on the northeast of Israel, turns to the Philistines on the southwest, then to their neighbors on the northwest, and again to their neighbors on the southwest, until he has bounded Israel by a series of peoples whose crimes smell to high heaven, for they are, as George Adam Smith has pointed out, the crimes of barbarism.

He accuses each of these peoples in turn of cruelties beyond cruelty. They have made relentless warfare. When they were successful in war they sold whole peoples into slavery. Nations have warred against kin nations, and have sent their own kinsfolk into slavery's toils. These peoples have not been content to bury the bodies of the slain kings of other people, but have buried them in quick lime that even more quickly than the heat of Palestine would bring on the processes of decay.

As Amos arraigned Damascus, and the Philistines, and Tyre, and the Edomites, and the Ammonites in turn, he finds himself speaking to a larger and larger crowd, readier to applaud as their attention is called to the sins of foreign people. It is always easier, of course, to be interested in the sins of other folk than in the sins of one's own.

I have sometimes tried to outline the kind of speech which Amos might have made to a convention of the American Legion, or a national gathering of the Daughters of the American Revolution. I think he would have started out in much the same way.

He would have had hard things to say about France, with its greatest army in the world, with its unwillingness to bend away from an absolute demand for security maintained by force of arms, for its militarism, for its ruthless putting beneath the tri-color the hosts of Africa, for its taking up that philosophy of force the world had thought had been destroyed when the central powers were brought to their knees. For absolute dependence on the strength of arms France will pay its price. The American Legion would applaud that!

And England. Think of Egypt striving for independence, being told it is free but compelled to see the Union Jack above the fort at Alexandria, to have the streets of its capital city policed by the British, to have an English garrison close by its greatest mosque, to be denied the right to control the canal which reaches from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea through territory that is Egyptian! And India with its 300,000,000 people, and

its patriots in British jails! For the sins of hard imperialism Britain must pay.

And there is Japan, eagerly building up in the Pacific Ocean a military imperialism that is as ruthless as any which the world has seen. Moving into Korea with relentless march, treating patriotic Koreans to the water cure, and the stripes, and solitary imprisonment, until with broken spirit they are ready to accept the dictates of a foreign power. And so in China, and Manchuria, and the rest. For that sort of flouting of a world's moral sense Japan must pay the price. Even the Boston chapter of the D. A. R. would applaud that!

Amos had his applause. But having gotten his group to recognize that flouting moral precepts and procedures inevitably brings the penalties of God, he turns quickly upon these folks to say:

"If these people for the sins of barbarism God shall punish, how much more you? Think of your own life, measure your own sins against the sins of others! Some of them you will find the sins of barbarism, more you will find the sins of refinement,—those prides, those false ambitions, those dependencies upon the things that do not count when the sun goes down, those twistings of justice, those makings of the house of God merely a place of spectacle, the taking to yourselves in the pride of man's strength the credit for all that God has wrought. For three transgressions and for four God will not turn his hand aside. You may be certain that no matter how magnificent is the civilization you enjoy it shall fail in the day that tests the moral stamina of a people!"

And I have wondered what Amos might say to us.

"You criticize Japan, but the peoples of the islands of the South have known what the water cure means. The Filipinos desire freedom, the chance to determine their own political destinies, and in the face of a generation of promises they are still kept in bondage. You criticize France, but your war budgets are higher than the budgets of the land of which you are so critical. You criticize England, but when that imperial power suggests your sharing with other powers in a responsible leadership of a torn world you hark back to dicta suggested 150 years ago about entangling alliances, trying to draw your skirts about you and retire within the borders of your land, heedless of the needs of the world that cries to you for help. You build your cities great, your temples are vaster than men have ever builded, your schools and colleges multiply, but what of it? The graduates of your colleges join the exploiting classes. Your churches too often are but the places of spectacles without moral effect. Your courts seem at the command of those who possess wealth, and justice for the poor is hardly bought. Some of you live in luxury, while others get all they get to eat from garbage pails. For three transgressions and for four God will not turn himself away!"

That inexorable moral law to which Amos made appeal in the 8th century B. C. prevails in a world of law, and the compulsion which men felt in that day of the acceptance of responsibility for the results of practice men must still accept. Amos had a harsh message. His life upon the desert had taught him the connection between cause and result, and he must always follow through on that line. The desert was a harsh teacher. Naturally Amos' voice was harsh. There is no word rightfully in his book that is not a word of doom, doom pronounced upon a civilization that was depending for its continuance upon its material resources, and was heedless of the way in which it treated the common man.

Amos did not have the chance which we have to draw upon a wide range of history. The world was comparatively young in his day, and it is a tribute to his wisdom that he should have seen how true it was that there was "no price too great to pay for justice." Since his day nation after nation and empire after empire have crumbled in the seats that seemed the seats of power because they lost perspective, because they thought greatness was to be had in things, because they put their trust in the power of men and forgot the power of God.

I suppose it would be difficult for any one of us to believe that the day might come when the civilization in which we live should be no more. We see a book whose title is "The Decay of Western Civilization," and we hesitate to read it because its title suggests the sour dream of some dyspeptic upon whose word we ought not to depend.

There was a day when Tyre in relation to its world was as great as New York. The ships of all the seas came to it in trade. They builded great structures, and their market places throbbed with industry. What is it now? A dozen huts huddled on a spit of sand reaching out into the sea; not even a main road running in to it! If you would find the place where ancient Tyre thrived you must walk or ride across a road so covered with the sand of the sea that you cannot even drive a Ford across it.

We know that under certain circumstances that kind of greatness does not last. Yet how much we are depending upon that kind of greatness! Listen again to the relentless words of Amos as he suggests that only as a nation's strength is bolstered by justice will it continue strong!

It was a dark picture which Amos gave, but it was the kind of challenge to a wrongly placed optimism which had to be made if Israel was to be called to its senses again. Israel did not like it any more than we like the suggestion that what we have shall quickly pass away.

You will find in his book that the hour came when Amaziah, the high priest of the shrine of Bethel, reported to the king that Amos was preaching treason in the market place, that he was criticizing the foundations of the state, that something ought to be done about it, and that the king gave Amaziah the right to act. So he went to Amos where he preached from his wayside pulpit, and said to him:

"You are a foreigner in this land. If you want to talk that way, go back to the land from which you came! If you do not like the government and institutions of the land in which you sell your wool, there are other lands in which you may live. Go, prophesy somewhere else!"

So Amos was deported from Israel by a ruling group that believed they could deny ideals by silencing a man, that they could defeat ideas by putting out of the country those who were maintaining them.

Strange, isn't it, how slow the world has been to learn? Even now our own country is following Amaziah's plan. Over and over again we are suggesting to those who are critical of the way in which our life is going that if they do not like it the world is large. In the last dozen years we have shipped from these shores hundreds and thousands of people for no other reason than that they were giving voice to ideas which were not comfortable to good American ears, that they were suggesting that the time might come when the order of life which had had its birth in revolution might have to be changed in another revolution, not necessarily a revolution of arms, but a revolution of institutions. We have fastened hard names upon multitudes and made their lot difficult as we have tried to stop their speech as they criticized the things which gave us three meals a day and a house in which to live. We are much more concerned seemingly, as a people, with maintaining the things

we have than with being sure that our institutions continue to hold close to the realities of life and serve those who must live under them.

Interestingly enough, when Amaziah told Amos to leave the country Amos left. Then he wrote a book, and we have the book today. If Amaziah had allowed Amos to go on preaching at Bethel we might not have had the book, and the sound of his voice would have been forgotten. It is always that way. Over and over history has shown how impossible it is to deny to succeeding generations ideas that have values in them; that you cannot blot out of the world ideas which know no boundary, which are as contagious as joy under a bright sun.

"Preach no more!" said Amaziah, and Amos' book goes on challenging and re-challenging the life of the world to test its civilization by its contributions to justice. "No state lasts, no institution continues which by its processes makes harder the life of a man." That is Amos' word. He felt that Israel would not listen, that the only way in which in the end this lesson would come to live would be by the destruction of that kingdom. He said:

"God has tried to speak to you in the drought that burned up your crops, in the famine that followed the failure of your fields, in the plague that loomed up from the valley of the Nile, in an earthquake that crumbled your greatest buildings, but you did not see in the workings of nature a call to a consideration of God, and because you did not see God must relentlessly destroy."

Amos finishes his work somewhere around 745 B. C., toward the close of the reign of Jeroboam II. Jeroboam died in 743 B. C., and the process of moral and political decay to which Amos had been pointing became more pronounced when the strong hand of Jeroboam was lifted from the control. Within the next half dozen years there are half a dozen kings upon that throne, none of them living long, none of them dying a natural death. Assassination follows assassination as ambitious members of the kingly and ambitious leaders of the king's armies strive to occupy the throne. You begin to reap in this decade of Israel's history the results of what happened in those years of greater prosperity which Jeroboam had brought to that land.

HOSEA

When you turn to Hosea you find that everything against which Amos had been railing is more pronounced in its evil. "There is no vitality, no kindness, no knowledge of God in the land; nothing but robbing, lying, murdering, burglary, bloodshed upon bloodshed." That is Hosea's picture of Israel in 735 B. C.

You will remember that the rich merchants of Amos' time had sent their henchmen out on to the highways to hi-jack caravans. Now the common people are doing it.

You will remember that the priests, according to Amos, were willing to take money that had the taint of blood upon it, and some of them had grown rich by oppression. Now the priests are joining themselves together to steal on the highway.

You will remember that in the courts of justice, according to Amos, now and then a powerful person was able to twist the law to his advantage. Now the courts are depending for their judgment entirely upon bribery, and witnesses come to lie and perjure in the gate where the law is dispensed.

You will remember Amos says that the priests had brought about the shrine in Bethel some sacred women after the fashion of the shrines of the rest of the world, women who gave themselves as temple maidens to the lusts of the male worshipers, and that in the name of religion a man and his son would go in to the same temple woman. You will find Hosea suggesting that what made it possible for men to minister to lust in the name of religion had become so contagious that there is no virtue in the land, that the daughters of these same men are selling virtue for a price, and even the brides of Israel are seeking companionship with other men.

You have the inevitable happening. What in the later years of Jeroboam were taken as privileges by the strong and the rich are now taken as a matter of course by all the rest of folk.

Hosea comes on the scene at a time that is difficult religiously, morally, politically; a time that is exceedingly uncertain with the rapid changing of kingships, that evidences breaking of the morale of Israel. Men are coming to speak in those broken terms which the book of Hosea suggests. You who have tried to read it since yesterday will remember that after you get by the third chapter you have a series of more or less unrelated paragraphs working over and over much the same theme. Amos moves relentlessly from his record of his speech at Bethel through to the end of his volume, but Hosea's material is broken up in pieces, as broken in its production as was the life he was trying to describe.

Hosea comes into his place of prophecy by quite another way than that of Amos. Amos by slow processes of training in the desert had reached the conviction he must speak in the market place of Bethel. Hosea comes to his ministry through a personal experience which is as devastating as any that can come to human life. In the first three chapters he tells the story of that experience.

With a fine love he had brought to his own home a wife in whose virtue he trusted, in whose love he had confidence. Their first child came, and he named it Jezreel, "It will not be long now," suggesting something of the current of life of the time. His wife conceived again, and when the second child came Hosea was suspicious that the child was not his own. There was a third child, and this time he was sure that the child had another father. He said they would call it "Not my folk." His suspicions confirmed, the difficulties in his household ultimately led his faithless wife to say to her husband:

"My paramours give me oil and meal, and are ready to pay for my clothing. I shall go with them."

She leaves her husband to seek the ways of the loose woman.

These chapters picture the relentless course of that sort of life. At first she is attractive, and men shower her with gifts. But the kind of life she lives eats as a cancer, and her attractiveness fails. She becomes a sordid creature of the street, selling herself for less and less till scarce any man will have her.

All the while her husband is eating his heart out with the love he had for her. The time comes when he can stand it no longer, and he goes out into the place where she has sold herself and buys her for the price of a common slave. He brings her back into his house that she may have shelter and care, hoping the day may come when she will be restored fully to her position in his household. But that cannot be at first. The floutings of love in which she has indulged through the years must work themselves out in bitterness of repentance before it is possible for the love that rescued her from the depths to treat her once again as in the days when she was a bride.

In the restoration of his wayward wife Hosea gets his experience of God, the experience with which we shall deal tomorrow morning.

(To be continued)

The 2nd chapter of Philippians touches high water mark among Paul's teachings. It reveals our Lord's coming high exaltation, and why. He is the believer's pattern.

Paul's Letter to the Philippians

3. Philippians 2

Miss Caroline L. Palmer, Litt. D., The Biblical Seminary in New York

A FEW years ago there was an article in the "Century" magazine on "Discovering the World," in which its author said that many people run hither and thither to find books on nature to read, but do not look down at the grass at their own feet. We are seeking to read these chapters in such a way as to discover for ourselves the beauties of them. Discovering the beauties and truth of the Bible for oneself is always a thrilling experience.

In your study of Chapter 2 did you find something that thrilled you? Something that gave you a glow and made you feel like a discoverer? It does not matter whether it is a fact, a striking feature, an idea, or a personality.

This is one of the most searching tests that can be applied to the Christian community, church, or individual—the unity between Christians.

"Esteem others better than themselves." Is that practicable? It may be practicable, but it is not always comfortable. It coincides with what John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

The early Christians were not afraid of hard things. Paul realized that because of his chains the brothers gained confidence.

Their reactions to situations that would ordinarily be depressing; and the unusual statement that they were to rejoice if they heard of his death. Is that practical? Was Paul absolutely sincere when he said that?

The whole life of Christ is pictured in this second chapter. He is set forth as the believer's pattern.

The certainty that everything is going to work out for some good.

The striking statement, "Be like stars in this crooked and perverse generation!" Our generation is not the only one that is not altogether right.

All of these points are suggestive of the real meaning of this chapter. One of the most important things in the study is to get the context of certain well known passages in order to ascertain the meaning from the context. That is what the author of "Learning to Read" calls artistic reading, because if you take a statement in one paragraph and do not connect it with others you fail to unify it. "Image the whole, then execute the parts" is the advice of Browning. Image this whole section, and then execute its various parts: thus you will come to understand the meaning of them.

* * *

One verse often misquoted and misunderstood is the one, "Work out your own salvation."

With what verse in this second chapter would you like to begin this morning? The 5th, "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus!"

To what verse shall we go back to get some clue as to the context of this 5th verse? The first verse has "Therefore," and we must find a reason in the preceding section for the "Therefore."

In verse 2 we have, "Be of the same mind!" There is another mind. Be of the same mind!

We find, then, we are in a section dealing with the mind, with our thinking life. In verse 3 he uses that word again, and we have a pretty good idea of what it means to be of one mind, and also to be of the same mind. What was the danger?

We have here a letter of a father to his children, as it were. Paul is their spiritual father, and this is his injunction to them. He fears something, evidently. What are the things which he is suggesting might lead them astray? He does not say they are guilty of all this, but they might be. There is a possible danger, and perhaps it is true. What is the admonition suggested in verse 3? What is the opposite of being of the same mind?

Vainglory. A good synonym would be conceit. They are conceited about themselves or vainglorious, and then they are divided into factions among themselves. Be of the same mind, of one mind, and if you are, then there will be no need to talk to you about factions such as divided the church in Corinth, or factions such as divided the group in Galatia. You will not be guilty of conceit because of (now you come to the heart of it, which is in verse 4) "each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." We have, therefore, a clue in this important word "Others."

* * *

In the first verse there is the word "Therefore." Hence we must turn back to the first chapter and see if we can get any light on chapter 2 from the 27th verse.

Here is the exhortation, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ!" The marginal reading of that verse is, "Behave as citizens worthily!" They were proud of being Roman citizens. Paul says, "Since you have come into a new order, a new citizenship, behave as citizens worthily of the gospel of Christ! Be worthy of the position into which you have come in Christ!" Then he added, "So that I may hear of your state that ye stand fast in one spirit with one soul"; that this group in the church in Philippi should "with one soul strive for the faith of the gospel."

You have seen people walk together perfectly, you have known people to think together. That is not uniformity, that is unity: one soul and one spirit being athletes together for the gospel. Two great words,—citizens and athletes, —athletes together striving for the defence of the gospel with one soul and one spirit.

Paul is saying that if there is any appeal he could make that was strong enough to admonish them to be of one mind he would like to make it, and if they were of one mind his joy would be fulfilled.

John 17 has almost the same idea.

Jesus prayed that they might be one, that his group might operate together as a unit in order to carry on his work, and that his joy might be fulfilled in them, and it would be if he could somehow get them to work together as one.

It is one thing to tell a person what to do, and it is another thing to tell him how to do it; to present a sufficient motive, a sufficient interest, a sufficient spirit of adventure to do it. Hence when Paul writes, "Be of one accord, of one mind," it is necessary to help them by showing them how to do it. How in reality can they reach the ideal of which Paul is speaking here? Is it practical?

The first practical suggestion is, "Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." How can we look to the things of others? "In lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself." People have said, "I have to be careful what I say, but I can think as I please," but psychologists tell us that is a false statement, because what we think we are, and what we think we are going to say some day unless we redirect our thinking. There is nothing more important than redirected thinking. Hence when thoughts of conceit or of not esteeming another better than oneself enter into the mind what are we to do? Redirect our thinking!

One man who wrote a book on "Right Thinking" said: "If you had a hot brick in your hand you would drop it. If you have a thought in your mind that is not right, drop it! Put something in its place!"

When you begin to think about other people you have to somehow get a new thought into your mind in order that the other person may have just as much consideration in your thinking as you have yourself.

It is possible to recall many incidents of people who by redirecting their thinking and looking to God for strength have changed their lives. It has been said of a wonderful Christian woman that she practised the Come-Third religion. What is that? God comes first, other people come second, and I come third. So she practised that in her life, and by practising it she came to the place to which Paul sought to bring the Philippians, counting others better than themselves.

Jesus was asked by a learned scribe on one occasion what he regarded as the greatest commandment. He found an answer in the little known book of Leviticus, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Is that different from what Paul is saying here? Esteeming others better than oneself is evidently the Biblical teaching, and a fundamental principle of the Christian life.

For this reason you cannot live for yourself. If you think all of the time about others, you are going to act as you think. It is as natural as turning to the sunlight to turn to others when you think about them.

This principle makes it impossible to live in selfish competition, for everything one wants for himself he wants also for others. To delight in the achievements of others would be to cast out of life all envy and jealousy.

Regarding Christ

Another significant part of chapter 2 is its Christological passage. Many people study the theology of it alone. That may be all right, but it was not written in the beginning for theology. It was written for people who were in danger of not being of one spirit and of one mind, and Paul said to them, "Look at our Lord! He counted not the being on an equality with God a prize to be grasped, but emptied himself." The incarnation was the result of his emptying himself of the glory which he had with the Father. He might have been also the greatest, most honored man who ever lived. Did he aspire to that? He counted not the being of an equality even with man a thing to be grasped, but he became a bondservant. He counted not life a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself and became obedient unto death. It was Chesterton who said, "A suicide dies for the sake of dying: Jesus died for the sake of living." He was not throwing his life away, he was dying in order that his life might be reproduced in others. He emptied himself therefore, and humbled himself in his death on the cross. It was the lowliest, most ignominious death that was known in that day.

Why did he do it? Not to exalt himself, but for his infinite love for others, that he might have the life more abundant to give them. There is a note of triumph in Paul's concluding statement, "Wherefore God highly exalted him and gave unto him the name which is above every name." To him is ascribed universal homage, universal sovereignty. He is truly Lord of all.

Dr. Gossip in "The Hero in Thy Soul" speaks of an East Indian who said that our English and American writers seemed irreverent in their attitude toward Christ, since they speak of his charm and various characteristics quite evidently interested, attracted, fascinated if you will, but they are not on their knees and down on their faces before him.

That is where Paul would have us in the presence of Jesus Christ. When one gets Paul's conception of the Lord of all coming from the place of glory and then returning to receive universal homage and sovereignty he will inevitably bow his knees as Paul said, and give him the place of supreme honor. It is then that we see how trivial it is for one to have conceit enough to think about himself as better than another.

Paul is throwing out such a challenge to the Philippians. If the Lord of all creation emptied himself, cannot we simple people do the same? Why do we indulge in these small competitive attitudes toward one another? Why not be as great in our conception of life as was our Lord?

* * *

Jesus said to his disciples, each of whom was seeking to be the greatest (he had this characteristic in human nature to meet), "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your servant, and whosoever would be first among you shall be your bondservant." In other words, if they really wanted to be great they must give up the idea of being great at all, and spend their lives in the service of others.

The story of Mother Maria of the Ursulines contains a tribute to her:

"Her son said of this woman that she approached people with respect as living representatives of Christ."

Agnes Repplier the author adds: "Only a profoundly spiritual nature can daily contemplate the natural incapacity of people, and imperfect equipment, and bear in mind always that they are living representatives of Christ."

There was a woman in New York who went to the homes of women on the lower East side until the women requested that she be asked not to come again. Why?

"Well," they said, "that woman comes to our homes and sits on the edge of the chair."

The woman herself recognized her difficulty and was struggling to be freed from the superior attitude which she had toward others. That is what Paul is seeking. Regard others as better than yourself, and then you will not patronize them or think you are superior to them, you will be of one accord, of one mind!

There is a statement bearing upon this

(Please turn to page 127)

THE GOSPEL OF THE SON OF GOD: STUDIES IN MARK

International Sunday School Lessons

March 5, 1933

Jesus Giving Life and Health

Mark 5. 21-43. Lesson Portion—5. 21-24, 35-43

Two miracles overlap in this passage,—the instant restoration to health of an elderly woman incurably diseased and the reanimation of a girl who was dead. Our Lord's ministration to one sufferer does not deny him to another.

We see successively the triumph of love over prejudice, of faith over fear, of life over death.

Dying, 21-24.

Ruler Jaïrus' heart is breaking. His daughter is dying. His love for her, impelled by his anxiety, breaks down every barrier of pride, prejudice, social standing, religious superiority, that might restrain him from seeking Lord Jesus' aid.

Luke (8. 42) says the child was an only daughter, about 12 years old. A girl aged 12 in that country would be about as developed as a girl of 16 among us. Imagine Jaïrus' fatherly feelings! He humbles himself at the feet of Lord Jesus with many entreaties.

The case was urgent. Apparently our Lord had not yet raised any from the dead. (Compare verse 35!) Christ responds to his appeal.

Delay, 25-34.

Their progress is interrupted by a wayside ministry, such as occurred so often in our Lord's career. The interruption becomes an opportunity when this woman's earnest but imperfect faith gets for her what she wants. Our Lord knows the difference between the touches of the thronging crowd and the grasp of a soul in anguish making its venture of faith. Faith is the key to both these miracles.

Luke is usually regarded as the evangelist of womanhood, but though he was a physician he omits record of the four cases of healing of womankind recorded by Mark,—Pilate's mother-in-law, this woman with chronic hemorrhage, Jaïrus' daughter, the Syrophœnician girl.

Dead, 35-43.

While our Lord delays en route the girl dies. But note the significance of his words in verse 36 to support Jaïrus! Faith, though sorely tried by delay and death, is the only antidote to fear.

Scholars picture the coming of Christ to the dead girl in lovely terms. David Smith says he spoke to her caressingly, like a mother to a sick child. "Talitha cumi" are words, he says, with which a Jewish mother wakened her child of a morning. The words properly mean:

"Little lamb, get up!"

As in the case of the young man at Nain, and Lazarus, and others in the Bible, this was reanimation, restoration to the previous condition of living, and still subject to death: not the glorious resurrection from the dead in the usual doctrinal sense.

But while the girl was restored to life miraculously she was not to be sustained miraculously (43). Life for her was to be normal. Perhaps that is why our Lord cautioned silence about the miracle. He may have wanted to spare the girl—and himself too—notoriety, self-consciousness.

What different troubles invade every life and every home! Lord Jesus has power for every sorrow and sickness. When we send for a physician do we also call upon the Great Physician? He ought to be an actual living presence for every believer when any trouble comes.

Golden Memory Text—The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad! Psalm 126. 3.

March 12, 1933

Jesus Ministering to the Multitude

Mark 6. Lesson portion—6. 30-44.

Why is this the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels? It was not the only occasion on which our Lord performed a miracle in relation to food. Was it because so many thousands shared in that strange bread and fish, and could testify to the truth of it, and spread news of it far and wide?

The miracle took place in the spring of the year, before Passover (John 6. 4). It is thought that many Jews going up to Jerusalem for the Feast would be in that throng.

Read the accounts in all four Gospels so as not to miss any point,—Matthew 14. 13-21; Luke 9. 10-17; John 6. Thus, Mark does not mention the boy who happened to have the loaves and fishes.

Some lessons.

The need of rest after service, away from distraction. Note, it was not a sandy "desert," but clad with the green grass of springtime (39);

The compassion of Lord Jesus for the people, his welcome of them (Luke 9. 11), his readiness to teach;

The thoughtful calculation of the disciples, but their failure to reckon on Christ;

System, orderliness, organization in serving and receiving. The people sat down on the verdure looking like flowerbeds in their arrangement and perhaps in their colorful Oriental garbs. A seated company would not crowd the food distributors;

Thanking God for food;

Multiplication of available resources;

Everybody satisfied by Jesus;

Saving the left-overs. Abundance is no reason for wastefulness.

Draw a character sketch of Christ in relation to the disciples and to the people, and of the disciples in relation to the people and to Christ!

Spiritual meaning.

This is given in John 6. Christ is the bread of life, the food of the soul. Man is dependent on God both physically and spiritually. God can supply every need.

The word is full of hungry and needy people. We should not try to meet their needs without Christ. Any suggestion that would send people away from Christ in time of need is not true to the gospel.

Put yourself at God's disposal, and see how he can use you and your resources!

The heavenward look is always the secret of power. It implies conscious dependence on God.

Do we say grace before meals in OUR homes?

What fragments of our time and means and opportunities ought we to gather up?

Golden Memory Text—The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Matthew 20. 28.

March 19, 1933

The Effects of Alcoholic Drinks

Proverbs 23. 29-32; Isaiah 28. 1-4; Daniel 5. 1-4

The wets often quote certain Scripture passages that assume the proper use of wine. Do you ever hear them quote passages like these that describe the horrible effects of drinking, and warn against it? Liquors are more potent today than they were in ancient times.

THE DRUNKARD'S LOOKING-GLASS

Proverbs 23. 29-32

All that the teacher need do is take the clauses in this passage one by one, and explain them in their original application and in reference to modern wine and liquor drinking. We will quote from Moffatt's translation, which uses more modern terms and idioms than the Authorized version.

Wine-drinkers described, 29, 30.

A vivid portrait is drawn in a series of abrupt questions, and the answer is given. A pitiable but repulsive picture!

"Who shriek? Who groan? Who quarrel and grumble? Who are bruised for nothing? Who have bleary eyes?

"Those who linger over the bottle, those who relish blended wines."

Appearance and nature of wine, 31, 32.

The test of any habit or practice is not in how it begins, but how it ends. Wine at the first looks attractive and promises enjoyment, but its end is death.

"So look not on the wine so red, that sparkles in the cup! It glides down smoothly at first, but in the end it bites like any snake, it stings you like an adder."

The muddled, irresponsible condition of the drunken person is further described, 33-35. He has lost control of his senses and his brain. In a muttered soliloquy he reveals the power of the appetite over him.

"You will be seeing odd things, you will be saying queer things. You will be like a man asleep at sea, asleep in the midst of a storm. You will mutter, 'I was hit, not hurt; I was beaten, but I feel nothing! Whenever will morning come, till I can get drunk again?"

The only safeguard: "Look not!" 31.

The only cure for drunkenness is regeneration and filling by the Holy Spirit.

The only safeguard against becoming a drunkard is in total abstinence, prohibition. And this is something that every person can adopt for himself or herself, regardless of the success of prohibition as a law of the land. Thank God so many young people have grown up in America who have never looked on liquor or a saloon!

A National Warning

Isaiah 28. 1-4

This Scripture introduces us to Isaiah. He is addressing the rulers of Jerusalem (14) when Hezekiah was king, about 722 B. C. He holds up before them a picture of the northern kingdom, where a miserable condition has been brought on by drink. He wants the people of Judah to take warning from the awful sight, just as a modern prophet might exhort America to take warning from the evils of liquor in Canada or England.

Two sins prevailed, pride and drunkenness (1). They indulged in drunken carousals, but judgment from the Lord was impending,—a "strong one" would destroy them like hail and storm and flood, would capture Samaria like a delicious early ripe fig (2-4).

It happened in a couple of years. Shalmaneser and his Assyrian host wiped the ten tribes out of sight (2 Kings 17. 1-23).

But the destruction was not to be absolute: there would be a godly residue (5, 6).

Reckless Sacrilege Through Drink

Daniel 5. 1-4

A page in the history of Babylon is unfolded in this chapter.

Visualize an Oriental despot giving a banquet to his princes and lords, his consorts and concubines! Inflamed by wine, he is guilty of a most impious act,—he orders the gold and silver vessels which his ancestor King Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from the Temple in Jerusalem (a list of them is given in Ezra 1. 7-11,) to be brought so that the assembled company might drink out of them. Not only so, but as they drink they praise their own idol gods. Such are the insult and challenge they fling at God! But how does it end?

Liquor destroys a man's self-control and balance, and may lead him beyond intemperance to impiety, desecration, recklessness, pride, and other sins against God and man.

Golden Memory Text—At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder! Proverbs 23. 32.

March 26, 1933

Review: Jesus Our Example in Service

During this quarter we have had lessons from the first six chapters in Mark. (How many chapters are there in all in Mark?) But do not confine your review to the lesson portions! With our Lord as the center of interest try to think through Mark 1 to 6 by fastening the facts recorded, their significance and teaching, in the hearts and minds of your scholars!

How is he our example in service? In what aspects of character and service does he appear from incident to incident? What were his personal experiences,—his teachings,—his ministries to bodies and souls,—his manifestations of power over sin, devils, diseases, death? What made him popular? What kind of people opposed him, and why?

How can we realize his example in OUR life in our homes, schools, places of business, church and Sunday school, civic and social relations? In the need for preaching the gospel and spreading the kingdom; aiding the sinful and the sick; remembering the sabbath day and our religious duties; passing on Christ's teachings?

Golden Memory Text—Jesus of Nazareth . . . went about doing good. Acts 10. 38.

Philippians 2

(Concluded from page 125)

point in a recent book by Rufus Jones. "There is no blinking of the fact in the Gospels that life in the kingdom is an adventure, and that too a costly adventure. It may cost all that a person has, and even the person's life besides. It means going out into a world organized on a basis of self-seeking and calculation, and conquering it and transforming it into another kind of world by a confident method of love and grace."

We have to begin with ourselves if we are going to make this world over into one mind and one spirit, so that we have no superior racial attitude, no superior church attitude. Thinking others better than oneself,—it is that statement of Paul's which makes us uncomfortable. Just what does that mean? Let us not get away from it, but penetrate to the innermost meaning and then act accordingly!

"So then, my beloved, work out your own salvation" is the striking statement in verse 12. In the light of the preceding paragraph, what is the interpretation? Is he not saying that now that they have recognized what Christ has done they should work this out practically, "for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure"? God would help them as they attempt to be of one mind and one spirit, and to live worthily of the gospel. So then work out, set your mind to it and say:

"Yes, I can do this with every soul, and regard every living being as a representative of Christ, of whatever race, or whatever nation, or state, or society."

Work it out! God will work it in! Do all things without grumblings and without question, and if you live that way you are going to be like stars in this darkened world.

There is a verse in the third paragraph which might be connected with verse 4: "They all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ" (21). The things of others and the things of Christ are the contrasted expressions. If we are seeking the things of Christ and the things of others we will be, Paul says, like stars in this crooked and perverse generation. To think of the things of Christ first, and the things of others second, and those of ourselves third, will be to practise the Come-Third religion.

(To be continued)

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS

Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton, *Gorham, Maine*

Discovering Jesus' Principles for Our Lives

Matthew 5. 1-9, 21-24. March 5, 1933

The late William J. Bryan said:

"The man who tries to keep a book account of the good deeds he does to his fellow men, as one I personally knew did, never does enough good to pay for the binding of the book. The only superiority that is worth anything is that of helpfulness."

Christ said: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth!"

* * *

The Athenians had an altar to Pity, but that altar had no worshipers.

A recent traveler says there are no ruins of hospitals or asylums at Pompeii.

Christ taught us compassion for humanity by precept and example: particularly for the poor, the mourners, the sick, those troubled in body or mind or soul. He taught us pity's service.

Do you count yourself an adept in compassion's service?

* * *

"But I say unto you, swear not at all!"

Swearing is an evidence of poverty of words.

"Are you paid anything for swearing?" asked Eli Perkins of a commercial traveler.

"No, I do it for nothing," was the reply.

"Well," said Mr. Perkins, "you work cheap! You lay aside your character as a gentleman, inflict pain upon your friends, break a commandment, and lose your own soul. You certainly work cheap, yes, very cheap!"

Emphasizing your statements with oaths you are unconsciously saying that ordinarily your statements are not good without the support of an oath.

* * *

Here are elements of character that will be enjoyed by any one who discovers Christ's principles and enacts them in his life:

Affection	Industry
Adaptability	Joyousness
Co-operation	Patience
Courtesy	Poise
Democracy	Regularity
Devotion	Reverence
Discrimination	Self-control
Faith	Serenity
Fidelity	Sympathy
Generosity	Thrift
Good Humor	Trust
Hopefulness	Understanding
Hospitality	

The Kind of God Jesus Revealed

1 John 4. 16; John 14. 1-12. March 12, 1933

Do you want to know the kind of God Jesus revealed? Listen!

"He strangely condescends indeed in making things plain to me, actually assuming for a time the form of a man that I at my poor level may better see him. This is my opportunity to know him."—Henry Drummond.

* * *

Writes another: "Into the slave market of this world God came in the person of his Son, and paid the tremendous price which authorizes him to take as many slaves as he can find willing to go with him, and make sons of them."

* * *

Some say God is revealed unto men in other religions. But other religions are but gropings after God.

Others claim they see God in nature. But nature shows but one side of him, his immutable laws.

Still others, that he can easily be seen in philosophy. But philosophers have been unable to discover God with unaided reason.

We may see God dimly through other religions, nature, and learning as in poetry, art and music, but the Bible portrait of him, given by his own Son, is the best, for as we gaze upon his Son we can be changed from our sinful self into his image. No other sight of God gives entire satisfaction.

* * *

Said Tennyson toward the end of his life:

"My chief desire is to have a new vision of God."

Without Jesus' revelation of God man would not have these desires to see him and longings to be like him. "The acts, attitudes and thoughts of Christ were those of God." Did not Jesus say to questioning Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; I am in the Father, and the Father in me"?

* * *

A clergyman tourist tells of a porter whom he met in the midst of the noise, rush and confusion of a great number of trains coming and going in a London railway station.

"There the man stood hour after hour so calm, so good-tempered, so helpful to every one, that I asked him how he could do it. 'Why, Sir', he replied, 'you ought to know,—by the grace of God.' "

Ever and always his grace is sufficient for us—if we seek it. When such wonderful impulses thrill us when we do seek it, why, oh why do we not oftener seek it?

What Was Jesus' Estimate of Human Life? Can We Live by It?

Matthew 18. 1-6; 16. 26. March 19, 1933

While Francis Xavier was engaged in missionary work hundreds kept coming to him until he was literally worn out.

"I must have sleep," he said to his servant, "or I shall die. No matter who comes, do not disturb me! I must sleep."

Hastening to his tent, he left his faithful attendant to watch. In a little while, however, the servant saw Xavier's white face at the tent door. Answering his call, he saw on his countenance a look of awe, as if he had seen a vision.

"I made a mistake," said the missionary. "I made a mistake. If a little child comes, waken me!"

Christ's value of children is in his own words, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Queries one, Who could have foretold, when Jesus was born, what he would become?

* * *

A pioneer preacher in the Central West writes:

"I have now put my hand to the plough. O Lord, may I never turn back, never regret this step! It is my desire to live, to labor, to die, as a kind of pioneer in advancing the gospel. I feel a most heavenly joy when my heart is engaged in this work."

The joy of the Lord is Jesus' estimate and reward of faithful service. Can there be a greater reward or greater service than following him in his soul-saving principles?

* * *

We read that 3000 were converted in a day by Peter's preaching, while Andrew, so far as we have record, converted only one man. Was Andrew therefore worth only one-three-thousandth as much as Peter? No, for Andrew was the means of converting Peter, and without Peter there might have been no Pentecostal sermon.

Can you not envision Christ in conversation with one lone woman at Jacob's Well? and with the rich young ruler?

Every soul that is saved is a new argument for Christ's estimate of the human soul. "Heaven's gate is shut to him who comes alone."

* * *

The 20th Century New Testament translates Matthew 18. 6 thus: "If any one proves a hindrance to one of these lowly ones who are learning to believe in me, it would be best for him to be

sunk in the depths of the sea with a great millstone hung round his neck."

Set not thy foot to make the blind to fall,
Nor wilfully offend thy weaker brother,
Nor wound the dead with thy tongue's bitter gall,
Neither rejoice thou in the fall of another!

The word offend in the King James translation of the Bible may be translated "entrap." But whether we prove a hindrance, or entrap, or offend the humble seeker, we deserve the condemnation, for we are dealing with a human soul. How terrible it is to be the means of destroying a human soul!

Is It Practical to Live without Worry?

Matthew 6. 24-34. March 26, 1933

A man on a dark night, falling down a steep place, caught a bush growing out of the rocks and held on in the firmness of despair. His muscles strained and his grip was maintained with frenzy. At last he let go, expecting to drop to his death,—and dropped just six inches. And thus we worry with tense nerves when all the time we just need to let go and drop into the everlasting arms!

* * *

In one of our art galleries there hangs a painting of a large boat laden with cattle that was being ferried across an angry swollen river in the time of a storm. The artist has so cleverly pictured the dark, threatening clouds and the play of the treacherous jagged lightning that the fate of the poor dumb animals seems doomed. The title of the picture is "Changing Pastures."

Take this picture's lesson to thy heart, dear friend, when it seems that all your plans mean disaster! Keep faith in your Father, for he is simply "changing pastures" for your good!

"God meant it unto good"
Sounds as a sweet refrain,
Faith's undertone of comfort,
Soothing life's weary strain.

"God meant it unto good":
No second cause I see,
For 'tis my God appoints each day,
And plans my life for me!

* * *

Engineers on the railway dislike moonlight nights because they are all the time fighting shadows. There appears a shadow across the track just ahead that looks like a man, or a horse, or a tree, but it is not; it is only the shadow of something extending across the rail.

In worry we spend a lot of energy just fighting shadows. To weaken ourselves by worry is certainly impractical, unnatural, and unchristian, for it opposes the working out of Christ's will through us.

Some of your hurts you have cured,
And the sharpest you still have survived
But what torments of grief you endured
From evils which never arrived!

* * *

Christ argues that worry can not feed or clothe us, and enjoins us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things shall be added unto us. Again he says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!" Therefore—

"Never you worry,
Never you fret:
Sorrow endureth,
Joy shall come yet!
Lo, the day faileth,
Night mounts the skies;
Walk in the starlight
Till the sun rise!
Never you worry,
Never you fret:
God isn't done
With the old world yet!

Can God forget? The worst hasn't happened to anyone yet!

SELECTED THOUGHTS
FOR THE QUIET HOUR

TUESDAY, 1st. *The word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. 1 Peter 1. 25.*

Let the world progress as much as it likes! Let all branches of human research develop to the utmost! Nothing will take the place of the Bible!—Goethe.

WEDNESDAY, 2nd. *All the promises of God in him are Yea and in him Amen unto the glory of God by us! 2 Corinthians 1. 20.*

What a Book for hard times! The story is told of a saint in Scotland, who at a crisis of religious oppression was asked how she fared in such bad times.

"Bad times!" was the answer. "I never had better. One verse is now to me more than the whole Scripture was before. He hath cast me the keys of the storeroom, and bid me take my fill!"

THURSDAY, 3rd. *For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep. Acts 13. 36.*

What is the counsel for our day? Is it the ingathering of all nations, as is so widely preached? Not yet: that day of fulness is in the succeeding age. The counsel of God for you and me is the gathering out of an elect people for the name of the Lord.—J. A. Macmillan.

FRIDAY, 4th. *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer! Psalm 19. 14.*

Meditation is the touchstone of a Christian. It shows what metal he is made of. It is a spiritual index. The index shows what is in the book, so meditation shows what is in the heart. —Thomas Watson.

SATURDAY, 5th. *O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountains! O Jerusalem, that bringeth good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength! Lift it up! Be not afraid! Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Isaiah 40. 9.*

The Bible is not merely a revelation from God: it is also and more especially a revelation of God. Have you so thought of it? It is the unveiling of the hidden deity. It is showing to us what God is. From this will follow what we are to do.—George T. Purvis.

SUNDAY, 6th. *They all did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living. Mark 12. 44.*

Would you learn to keep the flesh crucified? Refuse to spend a penny on its gratification! Money-giving may be one of your choicest means of grace, a continuous fellowship with God in the renewal of your surrender of your all to him and in proof of the earnestness of your heart to walk before him in self-denial and faith and love.—Andrew Murray.

MONDAY, 7th. *Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. Hebrews 12. 24.*

Men have broken faith with one another and with God, but God is not a man that he should lie. If we are Christians, then the covenant that has been made between God and our souls is written in the blood of Christ and confirmed by the oath of God.

TUESDAY, 8th. *In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. Ephesians 1. 13.*

An eager attention to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit made us in some degree overlook the medium by which the Spirit works,—I mean the word of truth by which that heavenly fire warms us. I rather expected lightning than a steady fire by means of fuel. Glad, believing prayer and patient, consistent meditation in the Word of God will keep the sanctified man full of power, full of love and faith, and full of God.—John Fletcher.

WEDNESDAY, 9th. *Ask, and it shall be given you. Matthew 7. 7.*

Prayer is the door forever open between heaven and earth. Sooner than sound can travel to the upper air or reach the human ear the longing desire of the spirit reaches the eternal Friend. Whether we believe it or not we are living in an invisible world where our wishes are understood before our words are spoken.—Lucy Larcom.

THURSDAY, 10th. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3. 16.*

The connection between full faith in God's will as revealed in his written Word and in the incarnate Word is so close and intimate that you can no more separate them than you can separate between body and soul, or soul and spirit. Begin to separate them, and to study theology instead of the Word of God, and if it does not make you weaker rather than stronger you will be fortunate indeed.—J. Hudson Taylor.

FRIDAY, 11th. *When thou goest it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee! Proverbs 6. 22.*

Our safety and strength as individual believers depend largely upon our personal attitude toward the Word of God.

SATURDAY, 12th. *Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely! Revelation 22. 17.*

Augustine said that he took a whole Christ for his Saviour, a whole Bible for his staff, a whole church for his fellowship, and a whole world for his parish.

SUNDAY, 13th. *Preach the word! Be instant in season, out of season! 2 Timothy 4. 2.*

Speak but the word! The evangel shall awaken
Life in the lost, the hero in the slave.
—F. W. H. Myers.

MONDAY, 14th. *He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much! Luke 16. 10.*

Serve God by doing common actions in a heavenly spirit, and then, if your daily calling only leaves you cracks and crevices of time, fill them with holy service!—C. H. Spurgeon.

TUESDAY, 15th. *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth! 2 Timothy 2. 15.*

We do not have to be Bible scholars in order to know and to serve our Lord, but if we would have our lives to count to the utmost, both for man and for God, we must know the Word.

WEDNESDAY, 16th. *When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret! Matthew 6. 6.*

This habit of secret prayer, when joined to the other, daily reverent Bible study, puts a helmet on the head and a breastplate on the bosom; in fact, clothes the disciples in the whole armor of God, and makes him proof against the wiles of the devil.

THURSDAY, 17th. *Widen the place of your tent! Spare not your canvas, stretch it out! Lengthen your cords! Drive in your tent pegs! Isaiah 54. 2.*

William Carey chose these words as a text for a ministers' gathering and drew from them these challenging thoughts:

"Expect great things from God! Attempt great things for God!"

He asked those to whom he spoke: "Are you going away again without doing anything?"

Their reply was the beginning of the modern missionary movement.

What is your answer today?

FRIDAY, 18th. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass! Psalm 37. 5.*

To commit ourselves, our plans, our loved ones to the keeping of God seems to be more difficult for many of us than to trust him for eternal salvation. But those who have learned to do this have entered into a blessed security that others know not.

SATURDAY, 19th. *He believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Genesis 15. 6.*

Faith is never perfected by a morbid introspection, but by looking away unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. To get our eyes off self and on him, that is the simple secret of increase of faith!—A. T. Pierson.

SUNDAY, 20th. *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Revelation 1. 10.*

There are no hard and fast rules for sabbath observance. If you are in the proper attitude to God on the day which he consecrated as a day of rest and worship you will have no difficulties as to what is right and what is wrong procedure. John on Patmos had a heavenly revelation because he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Our reverence for the sabbath is limited by our own soul attitude to its spiritual possibilities.—Marion G. Gosselink.

MONDAY, 21st. *Abide in me, and I in you! John 15. 4.*

There are two perils to be avoided: one is emotional unreality, and the other is intellectual preoccupation.—Samuel Chadwick.

TUESDAY, 22nd. *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly! Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Revelation 22. 21.*

Oh, remember that as certain as the historical fact that he died on Calvary, so certain is the prophetic fact, He shall reign, and you and I will stand there! I durst not touch that subject! Take it into your own hearts and think about it,—a kingdom, a judgment-seat, a crown, a gathered universe; separation, decision, execution of the sentence!—Alexander Maclaren.

WEDNESDAY, 23rd. *Behold, he prayeth! . . . And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. Acts 9. 11, 20.*

Realize more fully that God hears the closet prayers of his people, and anoints for service!

THURSDAY, 24th. *I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel! Philippians 4. 3.*

Mary Slessor went to live in a tribe in Africa for whom all previous efforts failed. The chief scoffed at the idea of being helped by a woman.

"In measuring the woman's power," she answered, "you have evidently forgotten to take into consideration the woman's God."

FRIDAY, 25th. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God! For I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. Psalm 42. 5.*

Life is not meant to give us success and triumph, but to cast us upon God.

SATURDAY, 26th. *Good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 1 Peter 4. 10.*

You cannot write Christian experience once for all. It varies, it carries a thousand different colors and tints and hues and mixtures of color, and it utters itself in innumerable tones, complete, strong, tender, weak, whining, valiant, glad as the utterance of a trumpet and sad as the moaning of a heart that is stabbed. Do not, therefore, be looking out for uniform standards and unanimous opinions and coincident experiences! Christianity will answer you so as to bring up the side of your character that needs elevation.—Joseph Parker.

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BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS

Ex-President W. Douglas MacKenzie, D.D., *Hartford, Conn.*

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

Wednesday, 1st. John 1. 1-5.

1. All Christians are agreed that this Gospel is a true and glorious setting forth of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. The author, whom we shall speak of as John, was living in a center of Greek culture, presumably Ephesus, according to an ancient tradition. He was in contact with inquiring minds, men who were deeply concerned with the great problems concerning God, the created universe and the destiny of man. As a Jew by birth and training he had also been deeply concerned with the same problems. He had brooded over the story of Genesis, where he read of "the beginning," and of the creative word of God, "Light be, and light was." He had read the great passages of Proverbs, where wisdom is pictured as almost a divine being and the counsellor and agent of God in the creation of the universe. He now had learned of the Greek philosopher's idea that "Logos" —Word, Reason,—was the means by which the world received its order and its beauty.

2. As John brought his mind to bear upon those great problems and those great proposals for their solution he was also living under the power of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He knew him both as the historical Jesus of despised Nazareth and as the risen Christ. He knew him as the supreme lord and saviour of all who believe in him. This was not a speculation, a fancy, a superstition. It was a living experience, most real, most human, most divine.

3. How that vision grew upon his mind we know not. We do know that he came to see that Jesus Christ, who called himself "The Son of God," might be well described as that word of God, that eternal being, of whose glory Jewish prophets and Greek thinkers had those mighty foregleams. These great verses summarize that discovery of the inspired evangelist.

Almighty and eternal God, manifest in us and to us thy life and light in Christ thy Word! For his sake. Amen.

Thursday, 2nd. John 1. 6-8, 15.

1. The verses before us have quite evidently been introduced into the course of the majestic statement about the advent of the Word of God into the conditions of a human experience. If we take them out for separate consideration the story will go on quite smoothly and without interruption. But that does not lessen the significance of what is said in these verses about the mission of John the great forerunner of the Messiah. It is noticeable that John never speaks of him, as the other evangelists do, under the title of the Baptist.

2. Two things must be noticed. First, due emphasis is placed upon the great importance of John's mission. He was a man whom God had sent to fulfil a function of great and vital importance, "that all men through him might believe." That function lay in the past, indeed, for another witness is now at work among men, namely, the Holy Spirit (John 15. 36). But in that past the testimony of John was essential. Jesus was not in the awkward position of having to announce himself. He was introduced by one whom God appointed for that purpose.

3. There may have been one or more groups still gathering at Ephesus and elsewhere who called themselves disciples of John and preferred him to Jesus. There is little doubt that in this book it is repeatedly made clear that John was appointed not to be an independent messenger to humanity, but a voice calling attention to the real light, the supreme revelation of God. Jesus as the Christ must take precedence of John as "the voice."

Grant, O Lord, that we may hear all the voices that call upon men to see in thy Son Jesus Christ the true light of the world! In his name. Amen.

Friday, 3rd. John 1. 9-12.

1. The eternal being who is called the Word is spoken of partly in personal and partly in impersonal terms. He has been ever active in creation, and all things depend on him. He is in fact the life of the universe, and in human nature he acts as the light. The wonder of man's moral and rational nature is here accounted for. In man that creative word becomes not merely life but the power of understanding, of seeing right and wrong, of directing himself. It is from that source that through the ages and in all lands man has been able to build up his civilizations, to lift himself above the animal levels of conduct, to sublimate his instincts, to seek for the ultimate reality.

2. But alas, something has gone wrong with this glorious human nature! "The world knew him not." It could use his light for definite earthly ends, but it could not recognize the source of that light. Even when he came visibly into his own world his own people would have none of him. For there is not only light but darkness in our world. True, the darkness has never utterly quenched the light (5), but it has worked dismal wrong.

3. There is this, however, that many did recognize the light, and that when people did believe in his name, that is, cast themselves upon his person as the light of truth itself, they found themselves changed over completely. They then had the right to be and to call themselves "children of God." Sublime is that creative word, or life or light, sublime its supreme creation, namely, human children of God!

Fill our hearts, O Word of God, light of God, with this real joy, this living triumph of being children of God! Amen.

Saturday, 4th. John 1. 13, 14.

1. In these words the author reaches that event toward which the whole creation has been moving. The Word, creator, life, light of the world, did actually come into his own. And he has produced in human experience this wondrous change whereby living men and women have the right to know themselves and to be known by others, yea, to be recognized by the Eternal himself, as children of God. Quite evidently something has been done here which the ordinary processes of life could not produce. This divine sonship is not an act of these men themselves. No man can will himself a child of God. No child can inherit this status from earthly parents. It is a direct act of God. Each individual man or woman who is child of God owes that fact to his will.

2. But this is not a merely mystical experience such as many earnest souls were seeking all around these little Christian groups of "children of God." These others were trying to push their way up into the light. They were submitting to all kinds of disciplines to fit themselves for sudden contact with the eternal source of all being. Not so with this experience of the Word! We know that that eternal, living, divine Word became flesh and lived in our world.

It is strongly recommended that for individual use or in family worship the passage of Scripture be always read, and then the meditation upon it and the prayer. In family worship the Lord's Prayer might be added to the hymn verse or the prayer form that is used.

Incredible such a statement must have seemed if made before a Greek philosopher just in that way! Incredible it seems to many even today!

3. But when these words were written men still lived who could say that they had been in personal, open-eyed, intelligent contact with that person, that Word of God, nay, Son of God, eternal, unique, as his glory shone through the flesh, the earthly tent in which he chose to dwell. Grace worthy only of God, reality beyond all human dimness and sin, shone upon them as they lived with him and watched him in the story that shall now be told.

We seek thy grace, O Lord, we would taste of thy divine reality, that we may know ourselves as children of God! Amen.

Sunday, 5th. John 1. 16-18.

1. In verse 14 the Word of God, having appeared in the flesh, that is, in a human form and lived among men, is said to have been "full of grace and truth." That fulness has become the fountainhead of the new life which they actually possess who have trusted themselves to him. And there is no hindrance to that flow. It is grace following grace that is the daily draught of the Christian experience. Dr. Macgregor quotes from Philo, the Jewish philosopher:

"It is not God's will that men should be sated with one grace, for he gives them 'a second grace in exchange for the first, and a third in exchange for the second, and ever new graces in exchange for old. As one wave follows another from the depths of the ocean, so there flows from Christ's fulness wave upon wave of grace.' "

2. The New Testament writers are all more or less occupied with the relations of the gospel to the religion of the Old Testament. They are constantly aware both of the contrast and the identity of the two. It is the same God who gave the law through Moses and who has poured out grace and truth through Jesus Christ. To John's mind there was something more external, as it were, in law than in grace and truth.

3. These two ultimate forms of reality could only have come in a person who had an intimacy with God, which no Moses had or could have. Jesus Christ is a historical person, the Word in flesh, but in himself he is "the only Son." The words "in the bosom" are parallel to the words "with God" in verse 1. They indicate not tenderness, but intimacy based on relationship. And that explains the fact that Jesus Christ has interpreted to us the invisible Father. How intimately have we received that intimate interpretation of his?

Grant, O Father eternal, that we may daily receive grace upon grace in the knowledge of thee through Jesus Christ thy Son! In his name. Amen.

Monday, 6th. John 1. 19-23.

1. In the great Prologue, as it is called, verses 1-18, we have been moving on great heights where at times it is not easy to breathe, even though the vistas of peak beyond peak of truth are glorious. Now John plunges abruptly into the confusions of history. To understand them in their real meaning is no less difficult, if we are in earnest and honest about it, than to understand the great ranges of theological vision. And indeed the two always get mixed up together. The people who wish to have life without theology cannot have either; nor can those who are content to have a theology apart from the stubborn realities of life.

2. The story of the Word become flesh, the Son of God as Jesus the Messiah, really begins for this evangelist with the prophetic ministry of John. He presupposes that his readers know that story. Some of them may have even given too high a place to the man who only prepared the way for Jesus. So he picks out for emphasis one of the most remarkable moments in John's ministry: that, namely, when the Jewish authorities challenged him as to who he was. His preaching evidently indicated that a supreme crisis was imminent. His power over the people excited wonder. Was he the Messiah? Or the herald of the Messiah? Or the expected prophet like unto Moses (Deuteronomy 18. 15)?

3. Before these questions the bold, outspoken prophet suddenly became quiet and humble, though firm in tone. "No, no!" he said. "I only fulfil that other divine promise in Isaiah (40. 3): just a voice away in the desert here, calling, calling on you all to make your hearts a highway for God. For he is coming, and I am his herald!"

O Lord, who didst appoint him to prepare the way of Christ, we thank thee for the sincerity and power and humility of John! Amen.

Tuesday, 7th. John 1. 24-28.

1. We were told in verse 19 that the Jews of Jerusalem, which means the religious authorities, sent a delegation of officials (priests and Levites) to inquire into this movement of John's and to discover what he was aiming at. Some of the delegates were Pharisees, the party which was specially concerned about theology and the fulfilment of prophecy. It was they who came forward with a question which pierced to the heart of the situation. As if they said:

"We hear your disclaimers. But you are actually more than a voice. You are creating a movement, you are getting people to do something. What do you mean by this baptism of yours?"

That was quite a relevant and an important question from all points of view.

2. Our evangelist perhaps had before him Luke's somewhat different account of this situation, which emphasizes the general curiosity about the meaning and future of this movement. But the explanation in Luke and John is substantially the same. The public and the official inquiry got the threefold answer:

"Water is all I use in my rite of baptism. Some one else is coming with an infinitely higher power. He will pour not water but the Spirit upon you. I am not worthy to be compared with him. Nor is my baptism in the same world with his."

3. That some one else, John records, was then already moving among them. The words of verse 26 cannot mean merely that he was somewhere in the country. That would take all the point from the word "recognize." Jesus was amongst them, the evangelist records, and was undistinguished from any other pilgrim from Galilee. So lowly was John, so lowly was Jesus!

Grant unto us, O Lord, this beautiful spirit of humility, that we may not only resemble John, but even his Master and ours in this heavenly grace! Amen.

Wednesday, 8th. John 1. 29-34.

1. There are here as throughout the whole of this Gospel great gaps in the story of Christ's ministry. For instance, the actual story of the baptism of Jesus is not told. But we could not understand what is told here without the story in Luke in our mind. The day after that formal inquiry by the authorities an incident took place of great importance in John's view. It implies that Jesus had been baptized, perhaps more than 40 days before that interview with the delegates from Jerusalem, and had not been recognized by any except John himself. That is one of the most thrilling facts in the gospel story! The great miracle, the coming of the Spirit upon Jesus, occurred right there in that river among those crowds, and no one knew it but Jesus himself and his prophet cousin, John. "My successor is among you, and you have not identified him," John said.

2. But next day another great moment had come. With equal quietness Jesus was approaching John when the latter was most probably standing with only one friend beside him. This would most naturally account for the singular verb, "Look thou, the Lamb of God!" and for the emphasis on "two of his disciples" in the next story (35). Of course it is most natural to infer that

the man referred to was the narrator of this scene. John the Baptist did not shout this news aloud. He only "prepared the way of the Lord" by choosing one who proved a most valuable apostle as the first confidant regarding that which must be for a while a great secret.

3. John is represented as explaining to that confidant that when Jesus was baptized something happened which identified him as the one who would be the Saviour of the world. Sins repented of in John's own baptism could only be removed, canceled, done away by one who had God's Spirit in him. John says that he alone in that crowd had seen that divine Spirit descend like a dove and rest over the head of Jesus. What that clairvoyance meant we cannot tell. It has its place in the whole superhuman story of Jesus Christ.

Grant us, O Lamb of God, to receive the cleansing of our spirit by thy Spirit! Amen.

Thursday, 9th. John 1. 35-39.

1. On the second day after the conversation with the delegates from Jerusalem John was talking with two of those who had most closely attached themselves to him. There could be only one main subject of conversation at that time, when even the national authorities were concerned about the nature of John's message and the possible issues of his movement. These two young men were no doubt trying to get a deeper knowledge of the mind of this other young man whom they accepted as a leader of thought and action. Perhaps we are to understand that one of the two was he to whom the prophet had pointed out Jesus the day before, and part at any rate of their conversation would be concerned with that incident.

2. Jesus was walking about when the Baptist saw him and once more used that astonishing word, "Behold the Lamb of God!" It would be foolish to think that the author of this Gospel imagined that the words could be quite meaningless to an intelligent Jew of that day, especially as used by a prophet to a couple of his most intimate disciples. Nor could the words mean all that they came to mean in after days. They were sacred words, suggestive words, earnest words, and the two took the hint.

3. As they saw Jesus deliberately move away in a definite direction they followed him. It has been said: "There Christianity began, there the church was founded, when two men decided to cast in their lot with Jesus." They knew nothing personally of him. They followed on the authority based on his own experience of their former master, John. Jesus welcomed them, and long hours they must have talked with him. He won them forever.

O thou, who art the same Jesus and the Lamb of God, make thyself known to us, for we too would follow thee and dwell with thee in eternal love! Amen.

Friday, 10th. John 1. 40-44.

1. In the end most scholars will agree that these verses are based on a personal memory of the events recorded. It is more scientific to assume that and then inquire about their authorship than to assume an authorship which could only have invented them for subtle theological reasons. The original narrator must have been one of the group of men described here as the first disciples of Jesus.

Andrew hurries off to find his brother with the great news: "We have found the Messiah!" This means that they had evidently been looking for the Messiah. John the prophet had fixed their minds on that hope and excited them to think that its fulfilment was at hand. Andrew says: "He is here." It is great news, so great that even after the proofs of nigh two thousand years many cannot believe it.

2. On the fact that Andrew at once shared his discovery with Peter, and Philip with Nathanael, and perhaps the unnamed man with his brother James, one wise commentator has said:

"Thus there are those who seek Christ, those who are brought by others to Christ, those whom Christ seeks for himself. . . . Then each is fitted in turn (by his Spirit) to become a witness to others."

3. His lordship is evident at the start. This is no fumbling teacher, no stumbling leader. He looks straight into Simon's heart. He sees there the makings of a great character, a strong rock of a man. He summons all that is good in Simon to exert its full energy by changing his name.

"Become that," he says. "Nay, I will call you that now, that you may become it the sooner!"

We beseech thee, who knowest us altogether, to reveal to us what we are to become, that thine inspiration may be our strength and thy love our hope! Amen.

Saturday, 11th. John 1. 45-51.

1. It will always be difficult to reconcile the account here given of the movements of Jesus, and the first contact with his disciples, with the accounts in the other Gospels. We have always to keep in mind the fact that both the author of this Gospel and his first readers knew the story as it is told by Luke. Some contacts even intimate that contacts of Jesus with the Twelve before his selection of them, as the other Gospels relate it, must be assumed. This narrative gives a natural picture of the beginnings of it all. The first three disciples came to Jesus. But Jesus found Philip, and then Philip brought Nathanael. They were all under John's teaching, eagerly looking for the day of the Messiah.

2. We need not, of course, suppose that the conversations on these occasions are verbatim reports. If we compare an honest and good reporter's account of a conversation or a speech of a prominent politician with a word-by-word record on a dictograph, the general and essential meaning might be the same but the language would be different. So here we may have a good and true picture of the way in which Nathanael, whose identity is otherwise unknown, was won to discipleship.

3. At first he was incredulous. No doubt if John was a prophet the day of the Messiah must be near. But a man from Nazareth! A quiet person with whom John and Andrew had spent some hours of easy conversation! How could that be the Messiah? Philip's urgency brought Nathanael to Jesus, and at once all his doubts were swept away. Jesus assumed to be the judge of Nathanael's soul, and the latter was astounded, humbled, convinced. Further conversation is summed up in a picture drawn from familiar scripture:

"The man who has faith will see great things. He will see intercourse between heaven and earth established by Jesus himself, the Son of man."

O thou who seest our hearts, cleanse them that we may see clearly thy truth! In Christ's name. Amen.

Sunday, 12th. John 2. 1-11.

1. We cannot discuss the problems as to the place which this event should occupy in the order of events described by Luke and Mark. Let us first take the story as it lies before us!

It is at all points different in kind from any other story of a miracle wrought by Christ. It does not seem to meet a real and clamant human need, but merely to supply an addition to the joys of a prolonged wedding feast. The wine was nearly all used up, perhaps through the unexpected arrival of additional guests in the persons of Jesus and his disciples. It was not probably in the author's mind to emphasize the idea that Jesus was one who did enjoy a banquet and entered heartily into the happiness of a wedding celebration. But we may legitimately and thankfully accept that view of his attitude and spirit. Therefore we can take him with us into our times of natural and decent festivity.

2. The words of Jesus to his mother are not abrupt or rude, though they are firm and definite. The word "woman"

is the word he used on the cross in all tenderness and most considerate love, "Woman, behold thy son!" Even though he lets her know that the old ties are now surpassed and included in a new relationship, she is not offended. She felt sure he would do something to help out the domestic situation, and told the servants to be ready for his directions.

3. Marcus Dods has a beautiful passage on the obedience of the servants to the two commands, "Fill up" and "Bear." How absurd those orders must have seemed! But he is master of us all, and often we have to obey, often to endure, when we cannot see the reason for his will. But in the end we always shall see that his will is not only final, it is holy, and it is all of love.

Grant unto us the like spirit of that mother and those servants, that we may obey all thy will with perfect trust! Amen.

Monday, 13th. John 2. 11, 12.

1. Of the various words used in the Gospels for what we call miracles John's favorite is the word "signs," which is used here in verse 12. Throughout this Gospel the superhuman powers of Jesus over natural forces are thus spoken of as signs. In the other Gospels great emphasis is put upon the fact that he refused all appeals of the Jews to employ signs in order to prove his divine appointment and authority. The apparent contradiction is only on the surface. The Jews wanted as signs mere portents in the sky, or meaningless wonders like leaping from the top of the Temple and arriving easily and safely on the pavement before a gaping crowd. That kind of sign was indignantly refused by our Lord.

2. But by a "sign" John means a revelation—of power indeed, but always also of grace, of kindness, of mercy. Even in this which John calls "the first sign" Jesus manifested his glory; that is, he revealed to discerning eyes the glory referred to in the previous chapter (1. 14), "We beheld his glory." It was "full of grace and truth." Therefore his disciples, so full of curious wonderings, gave him their trust forever.

3. Says Marcus Dods again: "If the disciples believed on him when they saw him furnish these wedding guests with wine, shall we not believe who know that through all these ages he has furnished the pained and the poor with hope and consolation, the desolate and broken-hearted with restoring sympathy, the outcast with the knowledge of God's love, the sinner with pardon, with heaven, and with God?"

O Christ, who art the ruler of all man's woes, do thou remove our woes, fulfil our needs, crown all our hopes! Amen.

Tuesday, 14th. John 2. 13-17.

1. In this Gospel we have only brief accounts of that extensive ministry which Jesus carried on in Galilee. It is the plan of John to describe the contest of the Lord with the real authorities at headquarters of the national religious life. It was they who were mainly responsible for maintaining the religious faith and life of the Jews. It was they who had to decide whether his claims to be the promised Messiah must be accepted by Israel, or not. It was, therefore, with them that he was as deeply concerned as with the needs and responsibilities of the mass of Jews in Judea and Galilee. The other Gospels had not so fully described this aspect of his activity as it deserved, probably because their minds were not trained to understand the deeper significance of the discussions and events relevant to this view of the situation.

2. Therefore our evangelist has set here in the forefront of his story the cleansing of the Temple. Jesus we must suppose to be already known to the people and authorities, otherwise his act would have had no meaning and he could easily have been slain on the spot by an angry priesthood and injured merchants. "A scourge of small cords" is in his hand as a symbol, not a real weapon. As he swings it about and shouts to the defilers of the Temple to get out, they move unanimously, awed by his voice, his bearing and his words.

3. His words are given here with the emphasis on "My Father's house." Not "THE Father's house," or "OUR Father's house," but "MY Father's house." "You have defiled it, and I as his Son am here to defend its honor." The suggestion is made that his disciples discerned this astounding and dangerous act and recalled an ancient prophetic scripture which said, "Zeal for thy house hath eaten me up." Again his "glory" is shining out.

O Lord of all worship, grant that in all our assemblies and in our secret lives thy presence and authority may have sway! Amen.

Wednesday, 15th. John 2. 18-22.

1. As in the parallel story in Mark 11. 15-18, so here the Jews, that is, the Temple rulers, confront Jesus with the question of his authority for acting as if he were lord of the Temple. They ask him for a sign, and that of itself indicates that they regard his action as implying a claim to be the Messiah. But the coming of the Messiah, as every one believed, would be accompanied and proved by heavenly signs or portents which would astound, and so convince, men's minds. Where then were the signs which Jesus ought to be able and willing to give of his right over the Temple of Jehovah?

2. Now those who put this challenge to Jesus ought to have seen that they had no right to an explicit answer. Here had they been countenancing and even profiting by a nefarious use of the house of God for their own enrichment. It was as if a minister in our day should use his sacred post as pastor or otherwise as a means of gain, should bargain for a large salary, should use his position for purely worldly ambitions. How could such a man bring men to Christ, as every minister should be continually doing? Manifestly these Temple magnates were shutting their eyes to the real meaning of the act of Jesus. They knew he was right and yet asked him to prove it!

2. The answer of Jesus, whatever its exact wording, was brought up against him at his trial (Mark 14. 5, 8): "Destroy this Temple, and I will rebuild it in the shortest space of time!" How perfectly absurd the words sounded in their ears! The Temple had been begun in the days of Herod the Great 46 years before, and as a matter of fact it was not completed until nearly 40 years more had elapsed, and a few years after that it was destroyed utterly. But John sees a deeper meaning in the enigmatic words of Jesus. What was in the Lord's mind was the raising of his own body from the dead. He saw their hate destroying himself, the sanctuary, the true Shekinah of God's Spirit, seat of his glory: and he saw that body raised from the dead. John says that in after days these mysterious words were remembered, and they confirmed their faith.

O thou who inhabitest eternity, we praise thy grace, by which thou art willing to inhabit our hearts as shrines of thy holy love! Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Thursday, 16th. John 2. 23-25.

1. All serious students of the Gospels are impressed by the contrast between the attitudes of John and that of the other three evangelists on the subject of miracles. Here thus early in the ministry, as John depicts it, Jesus seems to be continually working "signs" as if they proceeded freely from his own will and fixed method, whereas even in Mark his miracles are only drawn from him by the appeals of human distress, and he is most anxious that they should not be spread broadcast so as to interrupt the real purpose of his present mission among men.

2. But there is another side to the matter even here. The people were convinced by his signs, but they were not really converted. Their belief was a superficial and a passing phase. Perhaps we ought to understand by their "believing in his name" that they accepted him as the Messiah; but they

did not really understand him. They were, like the crowds on Palm Sunday, enthusiastic about him as a mere political Messiah, and had no insight into his real spirit, message and purpose in the world. Hence we are not surprised to read that he treated these professions of enthusiasm with great reserve. He had no faith in the kind of faith which they proffered.

3. John gives a deep explanation of this attitude of Jesus. It was due to his deep insight into the workings of human nature. "He knew what was in man." There was a mind which used those standards of purity, of sincerity, of faith, which always open up the inner motives and real aims of men. Men of surrendered hearts have that gift in a large measure always, but Jesus had it in a supreme and divine measure.

We thank thee, O Lord, for the assurance that thou knowest us altogether! Therein is our only hope as we struggle with our ignorance about ourselves! Amen.

Friday, 17th. John 3. 1-6.

1. Nicodemus is introduced as an example of the personal problems with which Jesus had to deal, and more examples are to follow. He is a member of the supreme court of the Jews, the Sanhedrin, therefore intelligent and perhaps rich. He seems to have been a man who could be alternately timid and bold, hesitating between two opinions and two attitudes. So he does come to Jesus and does treat him with respect, but he comes by night and is full of confusion throughout the conversation. He confesses that Jesus has some kind of authority from God which is proved by the signs wrought by him, which are admitted by everyone to be real. Moreover, they are signs which establish his authority as a teacher. For that reason he has come to consult further with this "teacher come from God."

2. We need think neither that Nicodemus wore a condescending air nor that the first words of Jesus were intended as a rebuke. But we are made to feel that the divine teacher went straight to the main point. This Nicodemus has not seen or felt that he could not understand Jesus unless there were a moral revolution in himself. This kingdom of God which Jesus is establishing is not to be entered except by those who are changed fundamentally in their personal attitudes toward God and the law of life, in fact, "born again" (or "from above").

3. The amazement of Nicodemus is immense, and he confusedly speaks as if Jesus were referring to physical rebirth. But the Lord patiently explains that his words apply not to the world of the flesh but of the spirit. And as a man's flesh is derived from flesh, so the life of his spirit must be derived from spirit (6). "Water" is mentioned to remind him that repentance must precede seeing the kingdom, as John preached. But the emphasis is on the supernatural act. Miracle? Yes, but miracle of a direct creative act of God. These are the men who see his kingdom today as in all ages.

O Spirit divine, convince our whole world today that thy power waits to change all men into conscious sons of God! Through thy Son. Amen.

Saturday, 18th. John 3. 7-13.

1. Jesus seeks to help Nicodemus in his bewilderment. He answers, according to John, with a play upon the word "spirit," which in the Greek may be used either of the physical wind or of that in man which we call the personality, as in the contrast between flesh and spirit in Paul's writings. The same word is used of the divine element which is called the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit. So, Jesus seems to mean, the wind rises of itself on a still day and blows across the land. Where did it come from? It came of itself. Where is it going? It passes on, and no man knows its journey's end. That is mysterious, but it is real. Everyone wonders about its whence and whither, but everyone knows when it is here and blows upon his own face and fields.

2. So does the breath of the Spirit of God blow across the fields of human life, there producing its own characteristic changes in the relations and experiences of the individual soul. The new birth is also a real event, but no man can produce it in himself by any learning or practice of the law, by any excellent resolution of his own. It is an act of God as truly as the first birth, an act of the divine Spirit upon the human self.

3. Nicodemus is astounded. "How can these things be?" Here our evangelist in his own way gives in verse 10 what purport to be the exact words of Jesus, and gradually becomes less exact as a reporter and in verse 13 makes his own comments upon the whole argument. Even in verse 11 we seem to hear the voice not of Jesus only, but also of the same witness who wrote the first eight verses of 1 John, "We are witnesses of all these heavenly events, these acts of God." Those whose minds and hearts are set against such a view of the relations of God and man will resist the highest forms of witness. Even the witness of the Son of man who has appeared for that purpose will find that his heavenly message can be rejected. And what higher word can come from God than his?

O Spirit divine, breathe upon the hearts of men everywhere, that they may be moved to receive the witness and yield to the love of the Son of man! In his name. Amen.

Sunday, 19th. John 3. 14-16.

1. Some scholars suggest that in the history of the making of this Gospel according to St. John some passages got misplaced. Much welcome light has been thrown upon various portions by the rearrangement of such passages. For example, this paragraph, verses 14-21, does seem to be better placed if it is inserted in the middle of chapter 12, so that verses 3. 16-21 come after 12. 34. We thus have a most glorious and thrilling answer to the question of 12. 34, "Who is this Son of man?" In that case verses 3. 14, 15 may be placed after 12. 32, where again the connection makes the meaning clear and impressive.

2. If we adopt that suggestion we find that the words before us are an explanation given by Jesus himself of his great saying, one of the most revealing in all the Gospels, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Lifted up? Immediately the strange story recurred to mind from Numbers 21. 4-9. The rebellious Israelites are attacked by serpents. The only cure for their poisoned condition is found in looking at a serpent of brass which was raised before their eyes. That story is used here as a picture of the cure of sin by the cross where the Son of man was lifted up.

3. The prophecy of that illustration is being fulfilled today. All over the world people are being told that the Son of God and Son of man was crucified as an expression and proof of the love of God for all mankind, and that which God now demands of us is an act of personal surrender to the power of his love in Christ. To believe in him is to commit one's destiny into his hands in name of the proof he has given of his love. We must not say this is impossible, because vast multitudes have done it and are doing it. We dare not call it superstition until we have honestly and sincerely put it to the proof. This Nicodemus found later when he shared in the burial rights of the crucified, John 20. 29.

O God, since thou hast revealed and proved thy love in the supreme way, the gift to us of thy Son Jesus Christ, grant us to prove our love in our supreme way, by perfect surrender and faith! In Christ's name. Amen.

Monday, 20th. John 3. 17-21.

1. If we follow out the idea that this paragraph follows the words, "Draw all men unto me," 12. 32, as well as the word about God's love for the world, 16, they acquire a more

definite meaning. John the Baptist had spoken as if the day of the Lord would be only a day of judgment in the sense of condemnation. But here is the day of the Lord! The Son of man has arrived! The Son of God has been sent forth like an apostle of the eternal love, not to pass a sentence of universal condemnation, but for the saving of the world, to draw all men unto him!

2. But does that mean that there is no such thing as condemnation? Of course, in a moral universe that is impossible. Just as there are light and darkness in the outer world there are right and wrong, moral good and moral evil, in the lives of men. How does the Son of man, who was not sent to condemn but to deliver, how does he deal with these facts? John approaches the matter not from the point of view of some who say that men are predestined by God to one destiny or the other. Here we have the psychological approach. It is as men love darkness or love light, as their hearts are morally attuned to him or hate him who is the life and light of men when he is manifested to them, that they are condemned. The sentence of God is a recognition of facts. They have chosen their place in the universe.

3. Throughout this passage, as in fact throughout the New Testament, one must be impressed with the tremendous sense of urgency which animates the Christian message. At its fountainhead, in the attitude of our Lord himself and his apostles, the earnestness which shakes a world must be felt by everyone. There is no weak temporizing here with the awful grandeur of human nature. There is no sentimental gloating either over "salvation" or "perishing." There is only a sincere, forthright, manful facing of facts. It is the facts which call us all to see in the person and message of Christ the one and only infinite power of God over our characters and our eternal life.

Fill our hearts, O Lord, with a living confidence, a pure intent, a joyous triumph, through our faith in the Son of God, our Lord! In his name. Amen.

Tuesday, 21st. John 3. 31-36.

1. Obviously we must connect these verses with verse 13. The idea is further developed by the author of this Gospel that only one who is "from above" can have the right and power to speak directly for God and to be the channel through which the supreme gifts can be bestowed upon human hearts. One scholar says that the words "He that is of the earth is earthly" were "a proverbial phrase meaning that a man smacks of his origin; fruit tells root; human nature is human nature." That is why so many reject the message of Jesus. There is needed a change within a man, a removal of prejudice, before he can really connect with the spirit of One who is from above.

2. There are those also, the evangelist insists, who have gladly received the testimony of him who is from above. They know the meaning of the great facts stated in verses 34-36, and by their open confessions they confirm these truths in the eyes of other men. They are truths which contain the ultimate forces of God in them. To read them with an open heart is to be swayed by the Eternal.

3. And we may well ask today whether any messenger has appeared who has a superior method for connecting the individual soul with God than this faith in the Son of God manifest in Jesus Christ. I look in vain for any substitute which for a moment can compete with this gospel about Christ for power, beauty or persuasiveness. Until a substitute for Christ is discovered, why should we doubt the authenticity of those who say today that he has brought them to God?

O God our Father, persuade the sore and seeking hearts of our generation that in Christ thou hast given us life eternal! In his name. Amen.

Wednesday, 22nd. John 3. 22-30.

1. We are not prepared by anything in the other Gospels for this contrast between the work of John and that of Jesus. The statement that Jesus moved from Jerusalem to a country district in Judea and found himself in the neighborhood of John the Baptist leads first to the assertion that there arose some jealousy among John's disciples, and then to John's noble and high-souled reply. As to the first point, it may be looked at as a natural event. Men who had learned to admire and follow John as their master, a prophet sent from God, and who had not come under the greater spell of Jesus, would naturally resent his coming into John's neighborhood and openly assuming to perform that rite which was associated in multitudes of minds primarily with John and his rousing message.

2. The reply of the prophet, as it is recorded or interpreted here, gives a most impressive view of his character and spirit. He reminds them that all workers for God can get success only from him. That ought to keep them open-minded toward this Jesus. But they must remember what he had said before, namely, that he was not the Christ. Therefore he and they may well expect another to come who would surpass the work in which he John had been engaged.

3. Nay more, when the Christ does appear John will be as happy as he would be at the wedding feast of a dear friend. The news they have brought him, instead of making him jealous, has filled him with gladness.

His identification of Jesus as the Coming One is now being justified by results. John cannot give up his work, but he knows it must shrink in range and power, and he will rejoice to know that the influence of Jesus grows from more to more.

Almighty Father, cleanse our hearts from all jealousies, and fill us with joy when others are blessed abundantly in their work! In Christ's name. Amen.

Thursday, 23rd. John 4. 1-6.

1. Many have pointed out that John uses the difference between water and spirit to symbolize the great transition from the old age or dispensation to the new. When Jesus was standing in the Jordan at his baptism John "saw" the Spirit descend upon him. He contrasted his own ministry of water baptism with the spirit baptism which the Messiah would confer. To Nicodemus Jesus speaks of a new birth which comes from water and spirit. The water is used as a symbol of man's need of repentance, which was the main burden of John's message as a prophet of preparation. But the Spirit is the instrument whereby a man's moral nature is changed by an inward act of God.

2. This is the main message of the great chapter which opens with Jesus at the well of Sychar. The first verse is difficult to understand. It is hard to see why the Pharisees should be named at all here, or why after the earlier statement, twice made, that he did baptize (3. 22, 26), it should be said here that he did not baptize. Has something gone wrong with the original record? In any case it seems to be implied that Jesus decided to leave Judea because he did not wish to appear as a direct competitor for disciples with John.

3. He passed through Samaria, and one day at noon, over-tired by the journey, he sat down at the well-side. John loves at certain times to emphasize the human experience of him who was the eternal Word, the Son of God, of shining glory. So human was he that a mere journey wore him out while his disciples walked on to buy food in the nearby village.

For us, O Lord, didst thou enter all levels and bear all burdens of our human life! Thy love for us has no price that we can pay save love itself, and even that we pray thee to awaken in us by the intimacy of thy Spirit! Amen.

Friday, 24th. John 4. 7-14.

1. As he sat there alone Jesus saw a Samaritan woman approach the well. No one knows why a deep well should

have been dug at this spot, since there are streams not far off, or why this woman should prefer to draw from the still water, which has filtered into the well a hundred feet down, instead of from a nearby river. But the well is there to this day, and the woman may have had one of several reasons for her action. When Jesus asks her for a drink of water she pretends to be surprised. As a matter of fact, it was well understood that tribal or other barriers should be ignored where a stranger and a traveler asked for a draught of water (Job 22. 7).

2. This woman professed surprise at the request of Jesus at the time his own disciples were off to the nearby town to buy victuals from the Samaritans. Jesus replies that he could give her "living water" if she were to ask him. A gift of God it would be: has she any desire for that boon? This sudden leading of her mind to religion is confusing. Like Nicodemus she thinks he is referring to physical things. Since he has no water bucket, how can he draw out of that well? What does he mean by "living water"?

3. The answer of Jesus refers to a power possessed by him which is nothing short of divine. He can give water which springs up within the heart unto eternal life. The draught which he can bestow will both quench and quicken thirst. The more a man has of the Spirit of God, the more he longs for that blessing. The appetite and the satisfaction are ever alive, ever producing each other. That is the height and glory and joy of a divine-human experience!

Grant us, O Lord, ever to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that we may ever be filled therewith! Amen.

Saturday, 25th. John 4. 15-20.

1. When the woman perhaps lightheartedly or even sarcastically says: "I wish you would give me that kind of water, so that I need not trudge here every day for a drink or to carry back my home supply," suddenly Jesus sees the door to her heart and conscience opened by those words. So he bids her, who had been five times married and divorced and now lived with a man without marriage, go and bring her husband. Her agitated reply, and his words showing that he understood her past story and her present situation, led her to exclaim:

"Thou art a prophet!"

Then cleverly she seeks to lead the conversation away from the personal aspect to the principal matter of dispute between Jews and Samaritans.

2. That dispute was concerned with the true center of worship. Both Jews and Samaritans believed in the one God, the Jehovah of Moses, and in the ancient law. The dispute was as to the seat of his power, Jerusalem or Gerizim. Thus does the heart that is conscious of its stains shrink from the light and take refuge in any kind of theological dispute! This woman is not ready to face the true issue which the words of Jesus have opened up.

3. It is curious how this persists today, and even within the church of Christ. The moral issue with which at last every individual soul must be confronted is one from which we all start back when it is first thrust upon our attention. Only if there is already a real thirst for release, a real thirst for oneness with God, a real thirst for the indwelling of the divine Spirit in our daily inmost life, are we likely to face the two questions: What shall I do with my past? What will God do with it?

We beseech thee, O God, to give us day by day fresh and cleansing contact with thy mercy and thy Spirit in Jesus Christ our Lord! In his name. Amen.

Sunday, 26th. John 4. 21-26.

1. In this great passage we are taken to the heights of revelation, to move there in company with the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ.

First the Master deals with the woman's inherited prejudice, but he does so in a way which must have surprised her. He did not, like any other Jew, argue that of course Gerizim was a false claimant and Jerusalem was the true center of worship for all peoples. The truth was that neither place had any right to claim that prerogative. The main question is not where you worship but whom you worship. And then he seems to say that the Jews did have the advantage over the Samaritans, for the Jews had the prophetic outlook upon a divine purpose of revelation which the static beliefs of the Samaritans, limited to the Mosaic law, did not contain.

2. This leads up to the sublime teaching of verses 23, 24. First comes the word "Father," the name which comes to all human hearts and minds with an appeal both majestic and tender, both awesome and intimate. Paul knew that even Greek philosophers could see that mankind are "his offspring" and be near to the great discovery, but that the next great leap of faith could only be taken when a revelation has been made. The fatherhood of God could never be discovered in its fulness and reality. The knowledge of it is and can only be his own direct gift. And here the gift is made by God when he who is his own Son uses the word in all its greatest and richest meanings and bestows it as his supreme boon upon mankind. The human race has received from Christ nothing greater than the personal fatherhood of God. But the word fatherhood must not be used in any trivial and worldling sense. If people are to worship him appropriately, that is, in spirit and in reality, they must realize that God is spirit. Being spirit he cannot be limited to this place or that. Whenever a heart is sincere, there is his shrine.

3. The woman takes refuge once more in something more remote from her conscience than the direct appeal of these words. She knew vaguely that her people spoke of Messiah as some one who would come to do all things desirable for the people. "He will explain all these mysteries," she says. Then, we are told, Jesus to this bewildered foreign woman, with a wretched past and a darker present, not without wit and readiness of thought, gave the astounding announcement:

"Messiah? I who am talking to you, I am Messiah!"

Heavenly Father, we would learn to worship thee continually, everywhere, in our hearts, as thou art made known to us in Jesus Christ! Amen.

Monday, 27th. John 4. 27-30.

1. While Jesus and the woman were engaged in their strange conversation the disciples returned with food supplies. They were surprised to see the Master talking with this woman. It was quite an unconventional proceeding. A rule laid down by the Jewish rabbis has been quoted as follows:

"Let no one talk with a woman in the street, no, not with his own wife!"

That the woman was a Samaritan no doubt added to their surprise. But they made no remark to Jesus on the matter. Probably they already had proof that his rules of conduct lay outside all ordinary social conventions.

2. When the woman saw her conversation thus interrupted she turned abruptly, leaving her heavy waterpot on the ground, and hurried off to the village with her news. As it was in the heat of the day she found the men of the village resting, and excitedly addressed them:

"Come and see a man who has told me everything I have done!"

Of course she exaggerated, but that fact shows how the words of Jesus had opened up her inner life to her own view.

3. The men are aroused not merely by that description of the stranger, but by the challenging and startling suggestion:

"This man can't be the Messiah, can he?"

Immediately they arose and set out for the well. No doubt the writer had in mind here the eagerness even of Samaritans for a revelation of God. Everywhere there is in man this deep yearning for the divine. This glorious

fact is darkened by the other fact that there are so many inhibitions when a true word of God is spoken. It encounters immediately in all our hearts the opposition of our prejudices and our sins.

O Spirit of holiness as of love, grant that our hearts may hear and respond to thy message of redemption through Christ! In his name. Amen.

Tuesday, 28th. John 4. 31-38.

1. When the disciples have watched the woman go off on the way they have just traversed between the village and the well they turn to Jesus with the food they have brought. He is unwilling to eat, and they urge him to it. They cannot understand how he does not feel hungry at that time of day and after their exhausting journey. They even wonder if any one else has given him food. He answers their unspoken question:

"Yes, I have been fed, I am revived. I have been doing the will of God, I have been engaged in the work for which he sent me. From that I have had even bodily refreshment."

Only those who are capable of intense spiritual exertion can realize this experience. Physical weariness and hunger can be overcome for a time by a force of that kind. Food may even be distasteful after such exertion and amid its joy.

2. Then looking across the ripening fields he sees the men coming through them from the village at the message of the woman. So he turns to the disciples, perhaps pointing to the approaching group, and says:

"You know the proverb which the farmers utter after the hard work of seed time, saying, 'Now so many months, and the joys of harvest will arrive'? Lift up your eyes and look at my harvest coming to me already! No four months have passed between this sowing and this reaping. The great joy comes ere the labor is well concluded!"

3. Verses 37, 38 would seem to have no connection here, but their teaching is valuable for the Christian worker of later and indeed of all times. There must be no jealousy between sowers and reapers. Nor should those who reap be conceited. Humbly and gratefully they must acknowledge the hard work of others when they gather harvest from their toil.

O Lord of all seasons, it is seedtime and harvest always in thy world of human souls! Grant all laborers in that field the fulness of devoted love and rewarding joy! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Wednesday, 29th. John 4. 39-42.

1. Here are set forth certain features of the gospel as it spread beyond the confines of Judaism into the wider world.

The first of these is the immense importance of personal testimony. This is not the witness of an official appointed to go forth and deliver an authoritative message: it is a Samaritan woman of a bad personal history who dares to affirm that she has had this remarkable experience. Her witness is so earnest, so direct, so personal, that the men of the village are roused to explore the matter for themselves. In our own day there is too little personal and brave, outspoken witness from the lips of avowed and sincere Christian folk. A formal avowal of faith and a life of decency seem to many to be all that Christ demands of them. That is a mistake, and a great loss to him and his cause.

2. The second feature is that those men are pictured as going out to verify the matter for themselves, and as being so impressed by the personality of Jesus that they urge him to enter the village and stay with them. When they have had two days of prolonged and intimate converse with him the original testimony of the woman seems to fade away into unimportance. They say:

"Now we have heard for ourselves!"

Their conviction is personal. It is not the echo of another voice. It is the creation of his voice to whose teaching they have been listening with eager and receptive hearts.

3. As John writes these things he sees how the gospel has spread from land to land, from race to race, aye, always, always, from heart to heart. It spreads no other way because this is "the Saviour of the world." Tremendous words, setting one person in all his fulness of grace and truth over against a whole world in its darkness and need!

O God, grant that we all may be individual witnesses to the power of Christ our Saviour as Saviour of all men! In his name. Amen.

Thursday, 30th. John 4. 43-54.

1. Jesus went on into Galilee and stopped at Cana. There he was met by a man who was apparently an official under King Herod. From Mark we learn that the works and testimony of Jesus had reached Herod's court and created an interest which even attracted the attention of Herod himself. This "nobleman," as even the Revised Version translates the word (Moffatt has "official"), came personally to ask help for his son, who seemed to be dying. He must have had a certain kind of faith in the power of Jesus to bring him on that desperate errand.

2. At first he seems to be rebuffed with the words, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will in no wise believe!" Most probably the words are not a rebuff addressed to the man. They sound like a sigh:

"Ah, how many people won't trust me unless I work miracles!"

That the words were not a rude refusal or harsh rebuke is proved by the continued earnest appeal of the father's yearning heart that his son is at death's door and instant action is needed.

3. The man's faith has a terrible strain put upon it.

"Go thy way: thy son liveth!"

This means that the power of Jesus is far greater than the distressed man imagined. It can cure or announce a cure even miles away from the sickbed. We picture the man rushing off in that divided emotion of fear and hope. Then he believed. He knew that Jesus was the Messiah. That alone could account for his kind grace and his vast power over life.

Grant unto us, O Lord, individual experiences of thy power over us! Amen.

Friday, 31st. John 5. 1-9.

1. After a busy time in Galilee Jesus went up to Jerusalem to one of the great feasts, whether Tabernacles or Passover is uncertain. Some think he went up alone, as being unwilling as yet to encounter public opposition from the authorities. His hour had not yet come. Certainly, as we shall see, the authorities did not seem to know, though they may have suspected, who it was that wrought the cure of which we are about to be told, 11-13. And there is no mention here of the disciples being openly his companions at this time.

2. As he moves about one quiet sabbath day he comes to a pathetic scene. At the pool of Bethesda there was a portico where invalids gathered because the water had intermittent bubblings and were understood to have—perhaps they had—medicinal value. One man was lying there whose wretched state attracted the attention of Jesus. Almost 40 years he had been ill and been unable for some reason to get cured. Over him the love of the Saviour poured its mercy.

"Arise," he said, "take up thy bed and walk!"

3. Saviour of the world they called him at the Samaritan village. Saviour the royal official found him to be for his sick son. Saviour from an illness of two score years in this man's case. What are the limits of this Saviour's power? We dare not say. He calls forth our faith the more we put him to the proof. The world will one day acknowledge him as Lord of its life and Saviour from all its woes!

We praise thee, O Lord of all pity! Into thy hands we put ourselves with utter trust in the reality and fulness of thy love and power! Amen.

OUR BOOK TABLE

Three Noteworthy Biographies

Gipsy Smith Reminisces

The title of Gipsy Smith's new volume of memories and reflections is derived from the chorus of a hymn he uses to give tone to all his meetings,—the writer of this review was deeply moved when he heard it when the Gipsy was in this country last:

Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,
All his wonderful passion and purity;
O thou Spirit divine,
All my nature refine
'Til the beauty of Jesus be seen in me!

The Gipsy wrote his life story some years ago, but he has been hard at it ever since, and still is, evangelizing in all the world. This volume does not traverse the earlier years. It has chapters on South Africa, the War, Australia, America, as well as England. There is a large variety of experience and of lessons derived; many hints as to methods of work, "Stories Grave and Gay,"—a veritable treasure-trove written in that friendly way in which the Gipsy preaches.

All the time he is a witness of Jesus Christ. The character of the book is warmly evangelical and evangelistic throughout. Over 50 years in the work has not dulled his enthusiasm.

"I love life. I love my work. I have the best job in all the world. I never was so proud of it."

Isn't it worth knowing a man with such a spirit?

THE BEAUTY OF JESUS: MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS, by Gipsy Smith. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 228 pages, with frontispiece. $2.

New England Firebrand

No wonder Roger Williams is not better known! There has been no adequate story of his career or study of his revolutionary ideas. Such literature as survives from the time he lived is of a controversial nature, largely unreliable. At last appears a volume which claims to be a full-length portrait of the "New England Firebrand." It is the story of Roger Williams and his Providence experiment, his religious and revolutionary teachings, which bore fruit both in England and America.

Williams was born in London of well-to-do parents about 1603, and died in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1683. It was a stormy period in English history, the era of the Stuarts and their successors. Also of the Renaissance and the Reformation.

He was educated at Cambridge University. He began to prepare for the Anglican church, but his studies turned him against the church. Then he was thrown in with prominent Puritan aristocrats and landed gentry who formed the opposition to King Charles. Through these connections he received a "New England call" in 1627, and at length he landed at Nantasket in 1631, aged 28. He was now a Separatist in religious convictions. He also stood for absolute soul liberty and the separation of church and state. In 1635 he was tried in Boston for civil and religious heresy, and was banished from the Plymouth plantation. He retired to Narragansett in Rhode Island in 1636, intending to do mission work among the Indians, but it developed into a colony. He dominated the history of Providence and Rhode Island until his death.

The whole career of this able and brainy man must be mastered in a study of formative forces in American history. This new biography explains his then novel doctrines, many of which passed into the law of the state and the country. It also depicts his personality,—strong convictions, far vision, fiery enthusiasms, and withal a cultured gentleman of generous and tolerant spirit and practice.

ROGER WILLIAMS, NEW ENGLAND FIREBRAND, by James Ernst. Macmillan Co., New York. 538 pages, with frontispiece. $4.

An English Miner's Life Story

Jack Lawson's father was an English sailor. Jack himself followed the sea before he became a miner. He was born about 1882, and in 1919 took his seat as a Labor member of Parliament.

His book of reminiscences is a racy tale of an average working-class family in England. Miners as a class, he says, are clean, intelligent, ordinary, home-loving men; thoughtful, amazingly well read; heroic in a hazardous occupation.

He includes their women folk in his admiration. The account of his mother's death is tender. His father refused to be comforted, he had ceased to live. "He would confess that he missed his old mate. So he too after a short time went to join her with a smile."

"I'll soon be comfortable and very happy up there beside my old lass!" were almost the old man's last words.

The book is a human document of gripping interest. The prominence of the author brings in information and observations on much that has happened in the life of England.

A MAN'S LIFE, by Jack Lawson. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 288 pages. $2.

Nicodemus

A poem with this title occuping 13 pages of blank verse in a new volume of E. A. Robinson's poetry, is a fine bit of dialogue between Nicodemus and Caiaphas. The latter, self-possessed, self-righteous, secure in his office as high priest, smiles in a superior way at Nicodemus when the latter visits him one night.

"More like a fugitive
He looked, in a long cloak that covered him
With dark humility that composed itself
Conveniently with night, than like a lord
At home in his own city: and Caiaphas,
Greeting him, asked him why."

Caiaphas knew why Nicodemus was afraid,—he had been with Jesus.

"Beware of him,
I say to you, and stay at home o' nights!
I can see peril waiting, Nicodemus,
For this man,—and for you if you pursue him."

Nicodemus testifies and pleads and warns, but Caiaphas twits him for lack of courage.

"When he is chained, or stoned, or crucified,
As like enough he will be if you let him,
You and your sorrow may be seen, too late,
Mourning where safety and necessity
Have buried him. But you will ne'er be seen
With him beside you in Jerusalem.
I know you, Nicodemus!"

NICODEMUS: A BOOK OF POEMS, by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Macmillan Co., New York. 90 pages. $1.75.

Belief-ful Realism

Any one who expects to find in this book a statement of the condition of the churches as organizations, or a study of their present situation in relation to other organizations or to their own past, will be disappointed. There are no statistics and no figures of any sort. Neither is there any attempt to estimate the situation of any of the organizations, or even of the forces, that are ordinarily understood by the term "religious." The discussion is far deeper than that. Indeed, it is the most profound little book your reviewer remembers to have ever read.

It is a study of the temporal and the eternal. Deeply philosophical and even metaphysical as it is, it is at the same time most incisively practical. For the author defines religion as an "attitude towards the Unconditioned," and he identifies as its most effective present day opponent the modern capitalistic spirit (not necessarily a system, and certainly not men, as the author is careful to state), because it is the pres-

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- ☐ God's Power for Me.....1.50 — *Christian F. Reisner*
- ☐ Jesus and the Rising Generation.....2.00 — *W. A. Cameron*
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ent day manifestation of "self-sufficient finitude," which is utterly opposed to any "breaking through" of or towards the eternal.

The various forces that are striving to break through are the aids to religion; indeed, the manifestations of it. These appear not only in philosophy, but also in science, art, the treatment of history and politics. In the end every practical form of the expression of religion in the narrower (which is the ordinary) sense, from Roman Catholicism through all the varieties of Protestantism to the latest freaks of the occult, many of which are mentioned by name, is considered in relation to the author's main thesis, which is that over against "self-sufficient finitude" should stand "belief-ful realism." This is opposed both to skeptical realism on the one hand, and to idealism of any sort on the other.

Incidentally, the book contains several illustrations of the way that in the field of thought Europe leads America by a considerable distance. Certain things that are much in vogue among us, especially in the forms of pseudo-science and philosophy which we so dearly love and make so profitable to certain "professionals," believing all the while in our up-to-dateness, are here treated as though all the world knew that they are hopelessly discredited, or, which is probably more humiliating, hopelessly out of fashion.

It is stimulating and heartening to all to whom religion is a chief concern.

In a book like this a few stupid typographical errors are especially irritating. —W. O. Shewmaker.

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION, by Paul Tillich, translated by H. Richard Niebuhr. Henry Holt and Co., New York. 182 pages. $1.50.

Biblical Themes

TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH OF EASTER (THE): SERVICE SUGGESTIONS AND MEDITATIONS FOR GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER WEEK, by William H. Leach and J. W. G. Ward. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 191 pages. $1.50.

Mr. Leach is editor of "Church Management," and sees the need of a guidebook for the increasing observance of Lenten anniversaries. So he has prepared Part 1 of this book: 11 chapters on the significance and technique of appropriate services. This material is not all original. He uses material by others he has published in his paper.

Part 2, nine chapters beginning at page 87, comprises meditations by Dr. Ward, now of Oak Park, Ill., on a Pre-Easter communion theme (Luke 22. 15, 16), the seven words from the cross, and an Easter Sunday message based on John 20. 13 and Luke 24. 5, 6. He has a forceful dramatic style which has given him success in his pastorates.

WORD PICTURES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, VOLUME 6, THE GENERAL EPISTLES AND THE APOCALYPSE, by Archibald Thomas Robertson. Harper & Brothers, New York. 488 pages. $3.50.

Here comes the last volume of this notable series of helps to the fuller understanding of the Greek of the New Testament! Each volume as it appeared received our hearty and respectful endorsement, representing as they do the best thought of one of the greatest of living Greek scholars.

There is first a general introduction to the group of seven General Epistles. Each epistle also has its own Introduction, covering such points as the author, date, style, purpose, special features and applications.

The Revelation begins at page 269. Here the Introduction runs to 10 pages, with four pages more of a Bibliography of books since 1875.

This series can be used by a Bible student who does not know Greek, and it will enable him to see far into the English text.

Two New Studies of Paul

MAN FROM TARSUS (THE): HIS WORLD, PERSONALITY, AND RELIGIOUS GENIUS, by Lawrence Otto Lineberger. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 240 pages. $2.

After our Lord, Paul is the world's major religious genius, this author holds. Not only is Paul the greatest letter-writer in history, judged by the influence those letters have exerted, but he is the greatest religionist of all time. A biographer who has such a high, well founded estimate of his subject ought to write something worthwhile.

The first thing that strikes the reader is the directness of style. The author knows how to say something definite and positive in his opening words. There are no long or abstruse sentences.

The matter consists of 13 topical essays within the scope of the subtitle. They reveal wide study, careful thought, and deep insight. Four chapters carry the study up to Paul's conversion. The next four continue his career as a Christian. Then five chapters discuss in a general way his theology and ethics, "The Man As Revealed by His Words," and "Man of the Ages."

O'ER LAND AND SEA WITH THE APOSTLE PAUL, by A. A. ACTON. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 222 pages. $1.75.

As compared with the preceding study of Paul, this is a chronological presentation from his birth to his death, grouped

in 17 chapters each headed by a Scripture passage that indicates a landmark in Paul's career. He adopts 30 A.D. as the date of our Lord's crucifixion, 31-34 Paul's conversion, and 66-67 his death.

As indicated by the title the author's primary interest is in Paul's missionary procedure, for he regards him as the world's greatest missionary. The viewpoint is conservative, showing that Paul's "message was a plain and simple presentation of Jesus as Son of God and Saviour of the world." The intention is to popularize the life and teachings of Paul, but the author has mastered for himself the newest reliable knowledge of Paul and his times.

National Conditions

IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER, OR IS THE WORLD GROWING WORSE? by H. C. Morrison. Pentecostal Publishing Co., Louisville, Ky. 172 pages. $1.

Dr. Morrison has too much sound religion to be a pessimist. He does not shut his eyes to the good in the world, but he does not shut them to the evil that is so blatant and rampant. Chapter by chapter he explores current streams of life in the United States,—"The Old Political Parties," "The Menace of the Millionaires," "What Our Young People Are Being Taught in the Schools," and so on in 14 chapters. The facts are from observation and from clippings and quotations. They show a general drift of appalling character in numerous directions.

The volume is dedicated to those children of God who believe the dark hour only precedes the dawning of a better day when Jesus Christ shall reign.

OUR ECONOMIC LIFE IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN IDEALS, prepared for the Federal Council of Churches. Association Press, New York. 161 pages.

Eight essays upon aspects of the economic life of industrial workers, farmers, investors, consumers, and others, carefully worked out from available data. Proposals for economic reconstruction occupy four more closing chapters. A Discussion Syllabus is an aid in managing discussion groups. A lengthy list of Selected Readings is appended, and a digest of the Clark-Smith-Soule plan for a better economic order.

Various Topics

CHRIST IN THE CREED, by W. Graham Scroggie. Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London. 118 pages. 1/—.

Dr. Scroggie is as clear as crystal in his teaching and in his expression of it in words. Also he is concise.

In this book he takes the position that truth does not change, though its garb,

Free Distribution

WHAT? A method for furnishing free copies of RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK to foreign and home missionaries and to others who have special need of the magazine but who cannot pay for it.

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JEW THROUGH THE CENTURIES (THE), by Herbert L. Willett. Willett, Clark and Co., Chicago. 422 pages. $3.

The book is built around the speculations of a certain school of critics affecting the interpretation of Old Testament history. The author's view of Jesus is humanistic. He was "born of parents named Joseph and Mary. . . . He was a conforming Jew." Nowhere is there any admission of the supernatural.

The author has more reliable footing when he begins on "The Jew through the Centuries" at page 279, meaning subsequent to the destruction of the Jewish state in the second century A.D. Zionism, Jew and Arab in Palestine, and "The Jew Today and Tomorrow" complete the survey, but in a more cursory way than the earlier speculative chapters.

NEW HANDBOOK OF ALL DENOMINATIONS (THE), compiled by M. Phelan. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 327 pages. $1.50.

An index and manual of the numerous religious sects and groups in North America, with a Canadian section. The last word in this direction, and consequently most useful for reference.

OUR LITTLE PANAMA COUSIN, by H. Lee M. Pike. L. C. Page & Co., Boston, Mass. 135 pages, illustrated, decorated cover. $1.

We now have over 60 "Little Cousins," but surely our Panama cousin ought to interest us closely.

His history is a romantic one, especially since he became linked with modern discovery. Great names in American history are associated with Panama, from Balboa and Pizarro to Roosevelt and Goethals.

Not only are young Vasco's home life and experiences described, including an earthquake, but stories of the buccaneers and others are recalled, and the lad makes thrilling trips to Old Panama and New, meaning the Canal, which is visited in detail.

VOICES OF LIVING PROPHETS: A SYMPOSIUM OF PRESENT-DAY PREACHING, compiled by Thomas Bradley Mather. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 299 pages. $2.

The compiler wants to give evidence that the pulpit of today is a vital and constructive religious force, so he has secured sermons from 20 prominent preachers in this country and England, representing several evangelical denominations, and including three bishops.

The book is well printed, with generous margins. A brief biography of each contributor precedes his address.

WHY ARE THERE RICH AND POOR? by Abel J. Gregg. Association Press, New York. 48 pages.

"Can poverty be abolished?" is the problem this pamphlet tackles. It is treated in five sections, each giving suggestions and data, followed by a Discussion Outline with questions.

Also Received

PRAYERS OF A QUIET SANCTUARY, compiled by Rev. George N. Luxton, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. 24 pages.

The author has conducted weekday morning devotions over the radio since October, 1932. Requests for copies of prayers he has used have led him to compile this booklet. Many of the prayers are credited to their authors, but most of the material is adapted.

AMONG NEW BOOKS

CONSERVATIVE LOOKS AT BARTH AND BRUNNER (A), by Holmes Rolston. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 220 pages. $1.50.

CONTRADICTION OF CHRIST (THE), by Benjamin I. Greenwood. Page & Thomas, London. 36 pages. 6d.

GANDHI VERSUS THE EMPIRE, by Haridas Muzumdar. Universal Publishing Co., New York. 352 pages. $3.50.

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PROBLEMS OF PROTESTANTISM, by Lewis G. Leary. Robert M. McBride & Co., New York, 310 pages. $2.50.

QUESTION OF THE CROSS (THE), by Edward L. Keller. Cokesbury. 135 pages. $1.

REORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION IN CHINA, by the League of Nations' Mission of Educational Experts. World Peace Foundation, Boston, Mass. 205 pages. $1.50.

SERMONS FROM LIFE, by Clarence E. Macartney. Cokesbury. 291 pages. $1.50.

Selected Thoughts

(Concluded from page 130)

SUNDAY, 27th. *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God! Colossians 3. 2, 3.*

"What people want to see in the pulpit," says one blessed with vision, "is not a wardrobe, but a man; not a religious official, but a saint and a prophet. And what a preacher wants to see in the pew is religion, not religiosity; moral earnestness, and not respectable indifference. Above all else, let us be real!"

MONDAY, 28th. *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify thy name for evermore: for great is thy mercy toward me, and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell! Psalm 86. 12, 13.*

Surely the goodness of God has been the same to us as to the saints of old. Let us, then, weave his mercies into a song! Let our souls give forth music as sweet and as exhilarating as came from David's harp, while we praise the Lord whose mercy endureth forever! —C. H. Spurgeon.

TUESDAY, 29th. *My god shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus! Philippians 4. 19.*

"God's work, done in God's way, will never lack God's supply." Hudson Taylor said this, and proved it true.

WEDNESDAY, 30th. *And it came to pass that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples! Luke 11. 1.*

There is no way to learn to pray but by praying. We discover by using. We learn by practice. Though a man should have all knowledge about prayer and though he understand all mysteries about prayer, unless he prays he will never learn to pray. Not the form of the prayer, but the spirit of the one who prays, is the essential thing to the heart of God.

THURSDAY, 31st. *Wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name. Philippians 2. 9.*

Christ never looks greater than when you put a great man by his side.—W. L. Watkinson.

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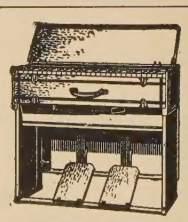

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God's Gardeners

(Concluded from page 107)

salesman. He appears almost timid. But what seems to be timidity is really a Christlike gentleness. He has no fear. He will approach anyone, anywhere. His voice is low, yet the listener soon realizes that here is a man who speaks with authority.

He could accomplish much by the spoken word alone, but he uses it only to introduce the book. He himself was converted by reading the Bible, therefore he has the utmost faith in its power. He wants to get a copy of it, or a portion of it, into the hands of everyone who needs help,—and who does not? No one pays him a salary to do this work. He depends for his livelihood upon the commissions from the sale of Scriptures. And yet time after time during the day I see him give to those who cannot buy, thus not only sacrificing his commission, but cheerfully charging himself with the cost of the book he has given away. And I see him talk long and earnestly, in one case for more than an hour, to indigent persons to whom he has already given the Word and who cannot possibly yield him a cent of profit.

No, it is the joy of gardening that keeps him at it. He likes to see the crusted soil breaking open, the seeds of truth germinating, the tender shoots of faith appearing, and at last the flowers and fruit of a Christ-filled life spreading fragrance and beauty in a drab world.

It is happy work, but not easy. There is daily persecution, scorn, scoffing, rebuke and rebuff. But he never dares indulge his temper. He must bear all indignities with dignity. He must remember whose ambassador he is.

At the end of the day he seeks the garden behind his home. He goes to work with shears and hoe and hose.

I express surprise that he is able to work thus after tramping the streets all day.

"It refreshes me," he says. "I store up strength here for the next day."

When the last scarlet light of the afterglow is mirrored in the roses I meet with the Vas family in the little bower for evening worship. And as Gabriel Vas prays that the labor of the day may prove fruitful I recall the many similar prayers I have heard, the petitions of Bible men throughout this land and beyond the seas who have dedicated their lives to making the beauty of holiness bloom in the neglected backyards of the hearts of men!

God's gardeners!

Hidden Resources

IN RECKONING the resources of our country economists find that about one-fifth of the total is in material wealth. The entire balance is in human resources—people.

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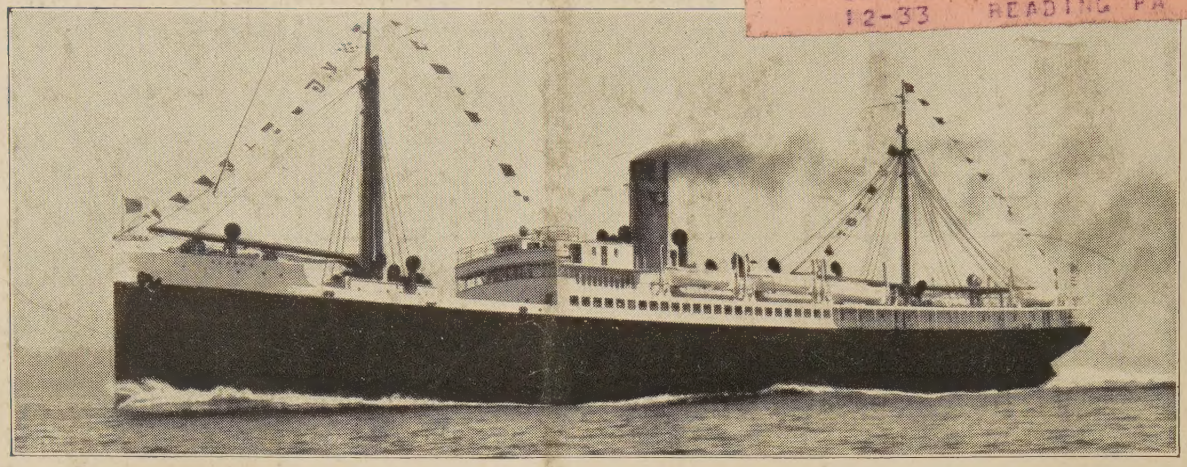

We're Cruising to Alaska - - -
Won't You Come, Too?

ON June 25, drop all cares of humdrum life and come with us for a three weeks' cruise to the Top of the World! We are going to Alaska—a special party of Record of Christian Work readers, with readers of other Christian Journals—traveling together like a congenial family.

Picture yourself sitting back in a luxurious Pullman or observation car, watching the American Rockies, the Cascades, the ranches, forests and orchards of the Northwest. Imagine yourself lounging in a deck chair aboard a steamer like the one above. A thousand miles of Alaskan scenery will pass within view of your chair! Glaciers, woods, snowy peaks, waterfalls and icebergs will glide past like a moving picture that you can hardly believe. We will be cruising aboard steamer *eleven* days, within sight of land all the time.

On Our Trip Across the Continent, We Will Stop Both in Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks

You live only once. Now is the time to be happy and do interesting, inspiring things. And now is the time to travel west. Rates are lower than they have ever been! Won't you join our special party? The companionship of friends, neighbors and people with interests like yours, will double the pleasure of your trip. You are cordially invited to come with us. You will certainly have a trip you will remember all your life. Mail the coupon below for tour booklet. No harm in investigating if you think you'd like to come.

Burlington Route
Alaska S. S. Company

Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway

Northern Pacific
Great Northern

Mail this Coupon!

Mr. A. P. Fitt, Editor
Record of Christian Work, 5 Moody St., E. Northfield, Mass.

Dear Mr. Fitt: I should like to have booklet giving complete details about the Record of Christian Work Tour to Alaska. Please let me know the cost from my home town, all expenses included. This places me under no obligation.

*Name*_____ *Address*_____

City _____ *State*_____

SITKA—*Typical Alaskan City—backed against mountains, with the sea at its front door. At Sitka we will visit Sheldon Jackson Training School. Other Missions and Christian Schools will entertain our party briefly at Haines and Wrangell, both in Alaska.*